The Family Strengthening Programme in Gasaka, Rwanda

The route to empowerment?

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Abstract

This study asked: How does the Family Strengthening Programme (FSP) in Gasaka, Rwanda affect caregivers' and children's empowerment processes. A pragmatic approach to answering this research question has resulted in an abductive method that involves 'going back and forth' between the different types of empirical data and applied theories. Based on case study research, empirical data was obtained through group interviews and individual interviews with selected stakeholders. The analytical framework developed to explore the research question is based on literature from both Development Studies and Psychology, and brings together two theories: Psychological Empowerment and Self-Determination (SDT). In this study, Empowerment comprises the concepts of Power, Choice, Aspiration, and Capabilities, while SDT comprises the concepts of Supportive Environments, Perception of Autonomy, Competence, and Relatedness. As a result of the abductive approach, the framework has been adjusted to the existing literature and the empirical findings of this study, and thus consists of the following three constructs: Supportive Environments, Capabilities, and Aspirations.

As part of their enrolment in the FSP, caregivers and children are introduced to various interventions facilitated by the FSP. The caregivers' and children's experiences and interactions within these FSP contexts were analysed. It is seen that caregivers and children are psychologically empowered through supportive environments, which enables them to enhance their 'power with' and 'power to' support one another, and to improve their economic, social and psychological capabilities, all of which in turn leads to 'power within'. Moreover, they improve their capabilities and their ability to choose according to their own interest. This fosters feelings of autonomy and competence, which in turn leads to empowerment. Finally, caregivers and children have entered a process of aspiration. Through the different interventions, they learn how to make plans and set goals according to their capabilities. This enhances their decision-making power and allows them to think positively about the future.

In general, both caregivers and children are motivated to engage in different activities, which enables them to change their current situation. They are considered psychologically empowered as supportive environments have empowered them to realise how to combine their experiences and capabilities in order to achieve their aspirations. Furthermore, most of the caregivers and children perceive themselves as capable of and entitled to do so.

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List of abbreviations

CBO – Community Based Organisation

CBO members – members of a Community Based Organisation

FS employees – Rwandan employees associated with the Family Strengthening Programme in Gasaka, Rwanda

FSP – Family Strengthening Programme

FS staff – employees and volunteers associated with the Family Strengthening Programme who are involved with managerial activities and/or supporting families enrolled in the Programme

FS volunteers – local Rwandans working voluntarily with the Family Strengthening Programme

Gasaka – one of the poorest sectors in Rwanda and the sector in which this study is conducted

Human resources – are conceptualised as good health, literacy, and organisational skills (Kabeer, 1999; Sen, 1999)

Micro business – a business with less than five employees

NGO – Non-governmental Organisation

SOS – SOS Children's Villages

SOS Denmark – the Danish sister organisation of the SOS Children's Villages

SOS International – the international umbrella organisation of the SOS Children's Villages

SOS Rwanda – the Rwandan sister organisation of the SOS Children's Villages

SOS staff – employees, volunteers and CBO members associated with the SOS Children's Villages

The Programme – the Family Strengthening Programme in Gasaka, Rwanda

VSLA – Village Savings and Loans Association

1. Introduction

Since the mid-1980s empowerment has been a key concept within development studies (Parpart, 2008). The term originated as a break from the neo-liberal top-down approach that dominated development studies at the time. Scholars and policy makers turned their attention towards bottom-up activities and incorporated local empirical research in their studies (Rowlands, 1997). At the same time, grassroots organisations started questioning the dominating top-down approach, which led to the inclusion of participation and empowerment as major concepts in development programmes (Calv, 2009). Gradually, the term was adopted and applied by several multilateral organisations, such as the World Bank, UN agencies, and international and local NGOs (Rowlands, 1997).

This adoption of the term empowerment in the 1990s led to more widespread usage, turning the term into a buzzword, especially for International NGOs and policy makers (Calv, 2009). The increased usage of the term even seems to have inspired NGOs such as the SOS Children's Villages (hereafter SOS) to engage in development activities. SOS was originally engaged in other humanitarian activities but at the turn of the century, SOS International implemented its first Family Strengthening Programmes: it is one of these Programmes that forms the scope of this study. Using empowerment as a means of building vulnerable families' "capacity to protect and care for their children … [and to enable communities] to respond effectively to the situation of vulnerable children and their families", SOS seeks to support children and their families (SOS Children's Village, 2007). These objectives draw on individual and collective aspects of empowerment, which is in line with how the term was understood in the 1990s.

Like SOS International, the Danish sister organisation (hereafter SOS Denmark) has become involved with development projects, and in 2013 they implemented their second Family Strengthening Programme in Gasaka, Rwanda (hereafter FSP or the Programme). The objectives of the programme include strengthening the economic capacity of vulnerable families through the establishment of Village Savings and Loans Associations (hereafter VSLA). Training in financial management and group dynamics combined with education on civic and human rights is used to strengthen the families and increase the prospects of development (SOS Children's Villages Denmark, 2012). These objectives derive from the three dominating empowerment dimensions; economic, social, and political empowerment. According to Eyben, Kabeer and Cornwall (2008),

economic empowerment enables vulnerable people to think beyond immediate daily survival and assert greater control over resources and life choices. Social empowerment allows vulnerable individuals and groups to foster the relationships necessary for them to change social norms and cultural customs. Finally, according to Narayan (2005), political empowerment enables people to claim and exercise their rights.

In light of these three dominating aspects of empowerment, Alsop, Bertelsen and Holland (2006) and Narayan (2005) call for greater focus on the psychological dimension in both research, policies, and development programmes. The psychological dimension is important for individuals' self-efficacy and self-confidence (Narayan, 2005), since it allows them to envision a different future and to perceive themselves entitled of this future (Alsop, Bertelsen & Holland, 2006). In research and programme evaluation it helps us to understand why "individuals with similar abilities and resources exhibit different propensities to act on their own behalf" (Narayan, 2005: 20). Despite the importance of such psychological aspects, SOS Denmark has not formerly integrated a psychological dimension in their FSPs. For this reason, it seems appropriate to study the significance of empowerment processes within the FSP in Gasaka, paying particular attention to the importance of psychological aspects. What is more, the psychological aspects of development studies have been neglected in research in general (Alsop, Bertelsen & Holland, 2006), and the current study seeks to fill this gap.

1.1. Research question

This study will seek to answer the following research question:

- How does the Family Strengthening Programme in Gasaka, Rwanda affect caregivers' and children's empowerment?

To answer this research question, this study will focus on the processes facilitated by the FSP affecting caregivers' and children's empowerment. It draws on the Self-Determination Theory, originating from the psychological literature, to explore the psychological dimension of the term Empowerment and seeks to elucidate how psychological aspects influence caregivers' and children's empowerment processes.

In this study, Empowerment is conceptualised by the concepts of 'Power to', 'Power with', and 'Power within', Choice, Aspiration, and Capabilities. These concepts will be brought together with relevant concepts from the Self-Determination Theory. These relevant concepts includes Supportive environment, Perception of autonomy, competence and relatedness, and Preference (for an elaboration of this, see section 2.3).

1.2. Scope and delimitation

This study is based on field research carried out in Gasaka, Rwanda. The empirical data has been delimited to focus on eleven caregivers and eighteen children all belonging to vulnerable families enrolled in the FSP in Gasaka. The caregivers and children were selected in collaboration with the SOS' Rwandan sister organisation (hereafter SOS Rwanda). According to employees associated with the FSP (hereafter FS employees), these families are considered to be vulnerable but also to have an interest in improving their livelihood and taking care of their children.

The part of the FSP concerning the communities' ability to respond effectively to the situation of vulnerable children and their families works with empowerment of local authorities at a meso-level and is out of the scope of this study (which is studying the identified families at a micro-level).

1.3. Case justification

The empirical data from the FSP that were used to answer the research question were gathered in one of Rwanda's poorest regions; the Gasaka Sector.

As with other districts in Rwanda, Gasaka is still suffering in the aftermath of the Genocide of 1994, in which many people lost family members. Since then, many men (i.e. fathers, brothers and sons) have also been imprisoned for participating in the war. This has dramatically changed the composition of families and their ability to make a valuable living. Additionally, like many other Sub-Saharan countries, families have lost relatives to chronic illnesses such as HIV/AIDS and diabetes (CIA Gov, 2014). Many of Rwanda's citizens struggle with psychological conditions, economic insufficiencies, and social issues as a result of the genocide. Even though these are key issues in the region studied, this case study was not chosen because of the genocide or chronic

illnesses. Rather, the case was chosen because of the state of poverty within the district (which has made it more difficult for vulnerable people to lead a valuable life) and because of the presence of SOS in the region.

SOS has been present in Rwanda since 1978 and the NGO currently runs four Children Villages and five FSPs in the four districts Byumba, Gasaka, Kayonza, and Kigali (SOS International, 2015).

SOS Denmark has collaborated with its national and local colleagues in Rwanda in designing the different FSPs in Rwanda. Funded by Danish foundation grants, the FSP in Gasaka is the second FSP implemented in the region, and the first FSP in Rwanda to include VSLAs. Even though external funding bodies have required evaluations and reviews of the FSPs in Rwanda, this study is the first to review one of the Programmes for internal purposes. In particular, SOS Denmark has shown an interest in reviewing their FSP in Gasaka which has allowed an exploration of the changes experienced by families enrolled in this FSP.
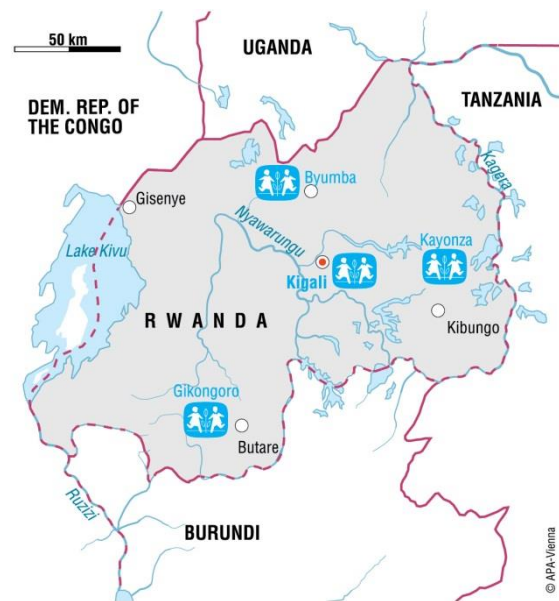
Figure 1.1 Map of SOS Children's Villages locations in Rwanda

1.4. Structure of thesis

This study consists of eight chapters. Following this introductory chapter, the second chapter presents the theories of Empowerment and Self-Determination as conceptualised in previous research and as applied in this study. The third chapter outlines the methodological approach by emphasising the philosophy of science underpinning this study and subsequently introducing the methods used for data collection and analysis. In the fourth chapter, background information about Gasaka Sector and the FSP is provided. In Chapter 5, the analytical framework developed in Chapter 2 is utilised to analyse the empirical data. This is followed by the sixth chapter, which discusses the analytical findings in relation to the analytical framework and applied methodology. Finally, Chapter 7 summarises the findings of this study, and Chapter 8 considers potential further research as a result of this study.

2. Literature review and analytical framework

In this chapter, the two theoretical approaches of Empowerment and Self-Determination theory are brought together in order to develop an analytical framework to analyse the actions and changes seen in families enrolled in the FSP in Gasaka. This chapter firstly reviews the literature on Empowerment Theory. Empowerment Theory is not a coherent theory as such, since the concept of Empowerment has been defined in many different ways and for different purposes. Generally, there seem to be two approaches to the conceptualisation of Empowerment. The first approach builds on a conceptualisation of empowerment consisting of differentiated dimensions, with economic, social and political as dominating (Calv, 2009). Less frequently used dimensions include psychological (Zimmerman, 1995), cultural, and legal (Chong, 2012) empowerment. The second approach to the Empowerment Theory is based on an understanding of different concepts constituting empowerment. Common aspects are Power, Choice, Aspiration, and Capabilities (Narayan, 2005).

The first section of the chapter begins with a short history of the concept of empowerment and a review of four dimensions of empowerment: economic, social, political, and psychological. [1] As argued in the introduction, the focus in this study is psychological empowerment. The review finds that the literature on the psychological dimension is sparse and the dimension is theoretically underdeveloped. The section then turns to a presentation of the concepts of Power, Choice, Aspiration, and Capabilities and their association with psychological empowerment. As the psychological dimension is not well developed in the literature, the second section suggests incorporating concepts from Self-Determination Theory, originating from Psychology, to fill the identified gap in relation to psychological empowerment. This section reviews the literature on Self-Determination Theory to identify relevant concepts explaining the processes that would support and maintain psychological empowerment. Finally, based on the above reviews, the third section presents an analytical framework that explains how the theories of Empowerment and Self-Determination reinforce each other and will be applied in the analysis.

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[1] It is not within the scope of this study to integrate the cultural, legal, or other less frequently used dimensions of empowerment. For this reason these dimensions have been omitted.

2.1. Empowerment

Empowerment as a concept emerged at a grassroots level as a reaction to top-down approaches (including neo-liberal and neo-classic economics) that argued that development would occur as a result of the 'spill-over effect' from industrialists' and entrepreneurs' increased wealth or of initiatives carried out by the state. Similarly, feminists, sociologists and Development Studies started to apply bottom-up approaches and included local empirical research in their studies and policies (Rowlands, 1997). Based on the empirical approach, scholars and practitioners applied the Empowerment Theory in studies, policies, and development programmes. Increased contact between scholars and the grassroot-level seems to have had an impact on the perception and meaning of empowerment. This has led to various differentiations of the term, with economic, social, and political aspects dominating (Calv, 2009). In this study, however, the focus is on the psychological dimension of empowerment. This dimension assists understanding of the individual's self-perception, their ability to envisage the world differently, and their ability to perceive themselves entitled to a changed future.

The four dimensions of economic, social, political, and psychological empowerment will be reviewed in succession.

2.1.1. The dimensions of empowerment

The widespread usage of the term Empowerment has received critique, especially by feminists. They claim that multilateral organisations, such as the World Bank and IMF, misuse the concept of empowerment leaving out the original meaning of the economic and political dimensions, and completely ignoring the social and psychological dimension of empowerment (Calv, 2009). Existing literature published by the World Bank (e.g. Alsop, Bertelsen & Holland, 2006; Narayan, 2005), meanwhile, demonstrate a wide usage of the concepts of economic, social, and political empowerment. At the same time, these publications point to the importance of integrating the psychological dimension into empowerment interventions and measurements. In short, Alsop, Bertelsen and Holland (2006) argue that empowerment interventions should draw on more than just one dimension of empowerment since these dimensions support one another and lead to greater empowerment.

The three dominating dimensions of empowerment – economic, social, and political – may, according to Eyben, Kabeer, and Cornwall (2008), be defined as follows. Economic empowerment may be described as the ability to negotiate fair deals based on individual contributions in growth processes and enabling people to think beyond their immediate survival needs. Social empowerment may be described as a process where people develop the ability to improve the quality of their social relationships and to secure the respect and recognition necessary to lead a valuable life. Finally, political empowerment may be described as the capacity to speak about and for oneself in order to engage in decision making within a democratic process.

Psychological empowerment is important for people's self-perception: it relates to individuals' ability to imagine the world differently and consider themselves capable and entitled to realise their visions. It is conceptualised as individual empowerment and incorporates a positive attitude to life, perceptions of competence and personal control. When individuals are psychologically empowered they believe that goals can be achieved and that anyone is entitled to achieve their goals. Finally, psychological empowerment integrates awareness of resources and factors that enhance or hinder the achievement of goals and factors influencing their everyday lives (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2005; Zimmerman, 1995).

Together with the economic, social, and political dimensions, the psychological dimension comprises the ability to exercise agency and choice, and is dependent on structures that allow the individuals to succeed in their attempt to make a change.

The second approach to conceptualising Empowerment builds on the identification of concepts constituting Empowerment. In this study, these are the concepts of Power, Choice, Aspiration, and Capabilities. These influence people's attitude and approach to life, their ability to envisage the world differently, and their ability to perceive themselves as competent and entitled to achieve their aims and thereby enhance their prospects of leading valuable lives. As such, the same four concepts may also be used to conceptualise psychological empowerment.

2.1.2. Power

One of the main concepts of empowerment is the concept of power (Kabeer, 1999). The definition of power varies according to time, context, culture, and the like. However, many have perceived

power as a zero-sum game with dominating (groups of) people having 'power over' dominated people. When discussing Empowerment, this concept of 'power over' is not necessarily useful. In fact, within Development Studies, the approach to power consists of 'power to', 'power with', and 'power within', concepts which are all based on consensual theories of power (i.e. power that is generated individually or collectively and allows the achievement of outcomes). As noted by Kabeer (1999; 4), power "refers to people's capacity to define their own life choices and to pursue their own goals, even in the face of opposition, dissent and resistance from others". These more positive approaches to power are relevant to psychological empowerment and each add to the conception of the term. The differences between 'power to', 'power with', and 'power within' will be reviewed hereinafter.

Within existing literature, 'power to' has been presented in two different ways. The first is in terms of people's ability or 'power to' affect others by advancing their own interests (Lukes, 2005). This could be interest in seeing others develop according to their full potential. Within this understanding of 'power to', people who are not used to articulating their own interests need guidance in order to define their own interests. Similarly, an individual may empower others by increasing their resources, capabilities and effectiveness to act. Such 'power to' is based on power relations in which powerful persons influence others to make them advance in a certain way. Unlike 'power over', 'power to' is consensual since the process of influencing others is in accordance with their existing values and preferences and is therefore not seen as dominating or persuasive (Rowlands, 1997).

The second presentation of 'power to' is more individual. When people realise they are capable of changing their circumstances, they create opportunities and act in order to achieve new outcomes. They challenge the underlying power structures within social relations or in society, and start questioning the norms and expectations. By doing so they may use their capabilities to define their own choices and pursue their own goals (Kabeer, 1999). Generally, 'Power to' is considered generative and productive (Alsop, Bertelsen & Holland, 2006), and when introduced effectively in empowerment programmes, it is positively received.

'Power with' can be defined as people achieving new outcomes collectively. By building collective strength, people learn to collaborate in order to negotiate, influence, and achieve their interests (Alsop, Bertelsen, & Holland, 2006). 'Power within' is described as a person's self-confidence, self-acceptance, and self-respect (Alsop, Bertelsen, & Holland, 2006). It encompasses the meaning,

motivation, and purpose people bring to their activities (Kabeer, 1999). 'Power within' is required for people to believe they are capable of achieving their desired outcomes and to enhance 'power to' and 'power with' (Rowlands, 1997; Alsop, Bertelsen & Holland, 2006).

'Power to', 'power with', and 'power within' are all interconnected. 'Power with' and 'power within' influence each other since an individual's capacity affects their ability to engage in collective activities, just as collective activities may strengthen the individual's self-perception. Similarly, 'power to' serves to support collective 'power with' and individual 'power within' just as people generating 'power with' and 'power within' increases their capacity to execute 'power to'.

From an empowerment perspective, 'power to, 'power with', and 'power within' are considered relevant to empowerment projects as people may develop an interest in seeing change within social norms and power relations. It is this latter understanding of power upon which this study is based.

2.1.3. Choice

Choice is closely related to power. The ability to act according to ones interests (i.e. being able to set personal priorities which may or may not be the priorities wanted or expected by others (Rowlands, 1997)), and to access and claim resources is required for people to have a free choice (Kabeer, 1999).

Freedom of choice is also about choosing among alternative possibilities. This is rarely an option for vulnerable and disempowered people (Kabeer, 1999). Often, people make choices according to their existing resources, their internalised values about positional status, or expectations about what they consider to be a valuable life (Sen, 1992; Kabeer, 1999). Personal factors such as the need for assets and capabilities or the inability to aspire to a better life may have negative consequences in terms of organising and acting differently (Narayan, 2005). Sen (1992) argues that vulnerable people being victims of longstanding deprivation and who are therefor in low levels of capabilities are forced to minimise their personal desires and adjust their preferences to more 'realistic' proportions. They stop believing that things can be different, that they have the possibility and capability to choose differently (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2005). Furthermore, due to internalised social norms, people may not feel entitled to choose according to their own priorities (Calv, 2009). When people stop believing alternatives are achievable, they may be unwilling to express their

preferences fully or they lose the incentive to obtain relevant information which could be helpful in choosing the best option in their situation (Khwaja, 2005).This leaves them with more covert preferences than overt preferences. Thus, peoples' choices do not necessarily reflect what they would have chosen if they had been given the opportunity, nor do they reflect whether they are satisfied with their choice.

2.1.4. Aspiration

Aspiration (i.e. the ability to envision the world differently and to dream about achieving this different world) is important when it comes to psychological empowerment: without aspiration, people are unlikely to achieve the change that could help them lead a more valuable life (Narayan, 2005).

According to Appadurai (2004), powerful people have a large 'stock of experiences' on which they draw when imagining new ideas. Vulnerable people, meanwhile, do not have the capability to generate such a 'stock of experience'. Their imagination is restricted and rigid, in turn because their situation permits fewer experiments, and therefore they generate less strategic goals. Further, aspirations are thought to be influenced by internalised social norms and expectations. They are formed through interactions and moulded by collective choices and actions (Narayan, 2005), some of which are made by more powerful people (Appadurai, 2004; Eiben, Cornwall & Kabeer, 2008). If vulnerable people are enabled to optimise their possibilities and to combine favourable experiences it enhances their desire to generate new outcomes and achieving new goals.

Thus, in an empowerment context, strengthening people's aspirational capacity may allow them to act towards a new and more favourable future.

2.1.5. Capabilities

In a development context, capabilities are more than just assets or economic income. Human resources such as good health, literacy, and organisational skills are considered more important if a person is to gain the ability to make free choices and to live according to his or her desires (Sen, 1999). As such, capabilities are a pre-condition for social change (Kabeer, 1999). Narayan (2005)

divides capabilities into four different types; human, social, psychological, and political. The concepts of social and human capabilities resemble what Kabeer (1999) calls social and human resources. These are acquired through different social relationships and in different settings, and they reflect norms and values, and future expectations from the different settings in which they are acquired. Kabeer's (1999) human and social resources and Narayan's (2005) four types of capabilities are of intrinsic importance as they improve 'power within' and enable people to use their assets in various ways.

When it comes to psychological empowerment, people who perceive they have the capabilities to meet their goals change their preferences and set new and more challenging goals. When they realise they have the capability to accomplish more difficult activities, they are more likely to feel positively about the future, and to experience continual success. This generates feelings of self-confidence and self-respect, and this creates self-reinforcing loops of positive attitude and experience of success (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2005). On the other hand, people who do not possess the required capabilities to meet important goals experience "repeated failures and the resulting negative emotions can stop the cycle of psychological empowerment and result in depression, resignation, or learned helplessness" (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2005: 135).

According to Alsop, Bertelsen, and Holland (2006), different capabilities may support and facilitate one another as well as the development of new capabilities. Thus, focusing on a variety of capabilities may best explain how to empower vulnerable people.

2.1.6. Summary

Psychological Empowerment is one of many dimensions of Empowerment. It enables vulnerable people to adopt a positive attitude to life, and to believe that change is possible and that they have the competence to accomplish this change. It allows vulnerable people to identify factors that are enhancing or hindering the achievement of important goals and to critically understand the factors influencing their everyday lives. In this study Psychological empowerment comprises four concepts – Power, Choice, Aspiration, and Capabilities – each of which contribute in their own, yet interconnected way, i.e. individually and collectively they support the empowerment process improving people's capability to imagine the world differently, to choose a preferable alternative and to change their own circumstances by combining experiences and capabilities anew.

However, there is a lack of information on the factors and elements that enhance and maintain psychological empowerment. For this reason, relevant concepts of Self-Determination Theory shall next be introduced to further explain psychological processes in social action.

2.2. Self-determination theory

Self-determination theory is based on research by Deci and Ryan (1985) on human behaviour from a human development perspective. The theory takes its departure in an understanding of people acting in order to meet their basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness through engaging in intrinsically interesting activities, exercising their capabilities, and pursuing connectedness in social groups. Self-determination theory is a result of a critique of Skinner and other behaviourists, and Deci and Ryan (1985) argue that motivation comprises more than just intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The authors expand intrinsic motivation to comprise the satisfaction of three basic psychological needs: feeling of autonomy, perception of competence, and perception of relatedness. Further, they divide extrinsic motivation into four constructs: external, introjected, identified, and integrated regulations. These four constructs are all believed to affect people's behaviour through external controls but the degree of this regulation varies according to the autonomy that each regulation permits. Finally, they add 'amotivation' which they describe as the state in which people have lost all interest and act without attention and inspiration. Intrinsic, extrinsic, and amotivation are situated on the same continuum of motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000b).

Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation will be explored in the following sections.

2.2.1. Intrinsic motivation

Intrinsic motivation may be defined as the natural interest people have in exploring and investigating their own potential and ability to make changes within their environment. This stems from a natural tendency towards spontaneous interest, exploration, and enjoyment that lead to the development of cognitive and social skills (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). Furthermore, according to Ryan and Deci (2000b), activities that engender feelings of competence, autonomy and relatedness enhance intrinsic motivation.

People may be inspired to follow their inbuilt curiosity to seek new adventures that enable them to exercise, explore, and extend their capabilities, thereby developing their competence (Ryan & Deci, 2000a: 70). These challenges are called optimal challenges and lead to a positive development of increasing competences. Choosing interesting activities foster feelings of autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Too challenging activities, however, lead to feelings of despair, frustration, and anxiety making people amotivated. Furthermore, if people have been externally regulated or controlled over a long period of time, this lead to diminished curiosity which also leads to a gradual amotivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Thus, feelings of competence are only generated when people have the opportunity to succeed and master their chosen activities, while feelings of autonomy are generated through activities freely chosen out of intrinsic interest. According to Deci and Ryan (2008), the satisfaction obtained from feelings of competence must be accompanied by feelings of autonomy if intrinsic motivation is to be enhanced.

The enhancement of intrinsic motivation (brought about by this interrelation between the satisfaction of the psychological basic needs of autonomy and competence) is thought to be facilitated either by the individual's inner resources or by the contextual conditions. Contextual conditions that support exploration and curiosity enhance the individual's sense of autonomy since they are able to choose activities based on interest and volition rather than control or restrictions. Furthermore, supportive contextual conditions enable people to choose optimal challenging activities which again enhance their feeling of competence (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Such contextual settings are called supportive environments. Meanwhile, contextual conditions that lead to feelings of an external locus of control diminish feelings of autonomy (Ryan & Deci, 2000b).

Within the contextual setting, people often find significant others to whom they feel related because this feeling enhances a sense of belongingness or connectedness either to another person or a group of people. This feeling is referred to as relatedness and is believed to enhance intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). In a development process people are trained to act according to social norms within a specific culture or a social context (Deci & Ryan, 1985). In this context relatedness is believed to enhance internalisation of others' values and compliance with external expectations which again enhance intrinsic motivation. On the contrary, if values and norms are not internalised, and if the sense of relatedness is too closely linked to external control or uninteresting activities, people lose their sense of autonomy and competence, thereby becoming more extrinsically rather than intrinsically motivated (Ryan & Deci, 2000b).

2.2.2. Extrinsic motivation

Competence, autonomy, and relatedness are important factors in intrinsic motivation. However, they are also relevant for extrinsic motivation.

Extrinsic motivation may be differentiated from intrinsic motivation by the instrumental purpose of an activity in contrast to the intrinsic enjoyment of the performance of an activity. Even though considered to be of instrumental value, extrinsically motivated behaviour varies according to the degree of autonomy provided in the given activity (Ryan & Deci, 2000a; 2000b).

Behaviour exhibited due to external regulation is intended to satisfy external demands or to obtain externally imposed rewards. As people do not perceive such activities to be autonomous, externally regulated behaviour is often experienced as controlled and actions have an external locus of causality (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). The extrinsic motivations, meanwhile, may also be internally regulated with varying degrees of internalisation of values and regulations. The least autonomous of the internal regulated behaviours is introjection. While internally regulated, this regulation has an external locus of causality and is still quite controlling as people perform activities due to feelings of pressure. Thus, people act in order to avoid guilt or anxiety, or to attain feelings of pride or to enhance self-esteem (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). Identification or identified regulation occurs when people identify activities as being of personal importance and relevant to existing values. When identified regulations become integrated and fully assimilated within the self, they are considered integrated regulations. Integration of internalisation may be described as an active process that enables people to act appropriate according to cultural values and social norms while retaining a sense of self-determination. Such internalisation occurs as a result of transformation of outer regulations into inner regulations and permits people to act with a sense of self-determination. When cultural values and social norms correspond with people's existing beliefs and perceptions, the internalisation process occurs more easily than if there is great variance between external demands and people's internal interests (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Because of the integration of this regulation, behaviour is considered to originate from the self; therefore, integrated regulation shares similarities with intrinsic motivation. Even though fully assimilated and perceived as fully autonomous, the regulation is instrumental as people act with respect to a separate outcome instead of the mere enjoyment of the activity (Ryan & Deci, 2000b).

From a human development perspective, the extrinsic motivations are relevant because of the internalisation of values, social norms, and restrictions provided by the external environment. Internalising extrinsic demands and expectations enables people to act in the social world and to continue developing the capabilities required for future activities.

2.2.3. Summary

As described above, the perception of autonomy, competence, relatedness, and supportive environments are closely related. Feelings of competence, for instance, are only generated when people have the opportunity to succeed and master their chosen activities, while feelings of autonomy are generated through activities freely chosen out of intrinsic interest. By appointing significant others in supportive environments, people generate what Ryan and Deci (2000a; b) refer to as a perception of relatedness, which again engenders a perception of competence. Depending on the individual's perception of autonomy, they feel either self-determined or self-regulated. People tend to be extrinsically motivated when they do not perceive a sense of full choice or autonomy, and when the selected activities are not optimally challenging.

In this study, supportive environments and perceptions of competence, autonomy and relatedness are used to understand how people enrolled in FSP in Gasaka are influenced to act in certain situations. By bringing these elements together with the concepts of Power, Choice, Aspiration, and Capabilities, the study seeks to explore how participants of the FSP are empowered. For this purpose, the analytical framework shall be presented.

2.3. Analytical framework

The analytical framework adopted in this study aims to explain actions taken by caregivers and children in connection with the FSP in Gasaka. The framework is founded on the two theories of Empowerment from Development Studies and Self-Determination from Psychology. The concepts of Power, Choice, Aspiration, and Capabilities constituting Empowerment are brought together with the concepts of Supportive Environments, Perception of Competence, Autonomy and Relatedness from Self-Determination Theory. This result in a framework of three constructs: Supportive Environments is based on the concepts of power, supportive environment, and perceptions of

competence and relatedness; Capabilities is formed by choices, existing capabilities, and perceptions of competence; and Aspirations is generated by intrinsic motivation, the ability to aspire, individual capabilities, and 'power to' and 'power within'.

In the following section, the analytical framework and its constructs will be elaborated to explain their use in the analysis.

Supportive environments

In this study, supportive environments are regarded as a combination of supportive environments as presented by Ryan and Deci (2000b) and people's 'power to' support others to develop according to their full potential as presented by Rowlands (1997). It is thought that supportive environments enable groups of individuals to generate and exercise a collective 'power with', which then fosters 'power within' as presented by Rowlands (1997). In this process, values and norms are shaped and internalised. Furthermore, the supportive environments applied in this study are thought to produce perceptions of relatedness, competence, and autonomy. Supportive environments, thus, change the opportunity structures in any given context and are thought to empower (groups of) individuals.

Caregivers' and children's social interactions, their designation of significant others, their perceptions of competence, their ability to choose activities volitionally, and their ability to support or generate mutual support with others are aspects used to elucidate how caregivers and children benefit from supportive environments and how they are empowered.

Capabilities

In this study, individual capabilities are considered to be linked to the perception of competence, choice, and preferences. If people are able to achieve their aims, they are more likely to develop feelings of competence and to perceive themselves as capable of achieving certain goals or to behave in a certain manner. This fosters a natural curiosity to exercise various abilities and investigate new challenging opportunities, which then affects people to adjust their preferences respectively. Feeling competent and obtaining certain capabilities is also thought to enable people to

make purposeful choices or to choose according to their interests. Changes within the choices people make may be a sign of a change in their capabilities.

Positive and negative changes within caregivers' and children's activities are used to illustrate their preferences, and their capabilities to choose according to their own interest.

Aspirations

In this study, Aspiration integrates elements from both Empowerment and Self-Determination Theory. When people have aspirations, they are intrinsically motivated or internally regulated to follow their natural interest (Deci & Ryan, 1985). When facing new challenges or making plans, people draw from their 'stock of experiences' and combine existing capabilities with new activities resulting in new ideas and the expansion of capabilities and experiences (Appadurai, 2004; Deci & Ryan, 1985). In this process, it is more likely that people will be able to think differently or more creatively and to believe they will succeed with their creative ideas if they have generated 'power within' and psychological capabilities.

Aspirations are thought to enable caregivers and children to set goals and make plans of how to achieve their aims. Thus, to explore how caregivers and children are empowered to do so, their explanations of their dreams, goals, and plans are examined.
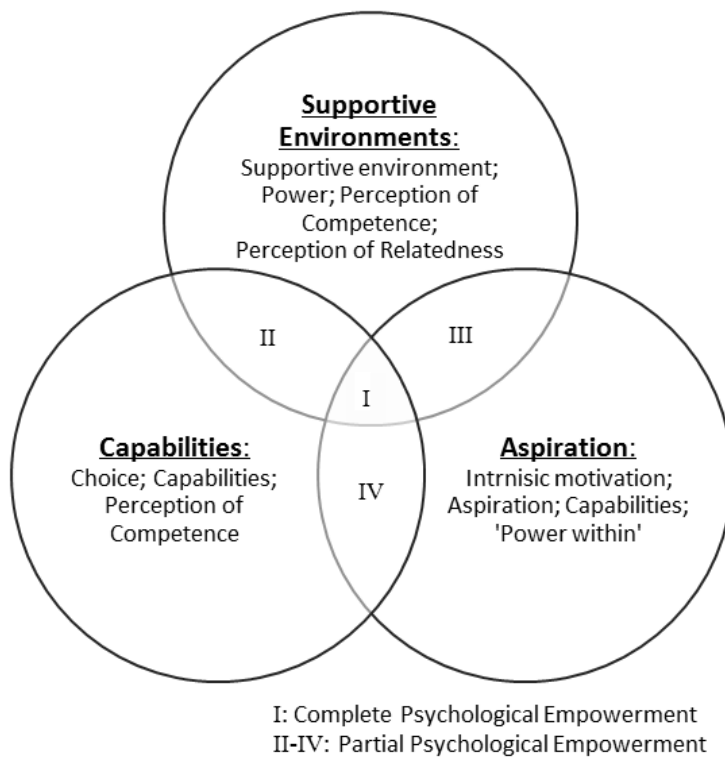
Figure 2.1
Analytical Framework, based on the theories Empowerment

As illustrated in Figure 2.1, some of the concepts constituting the three constructs – Supportive Environments, Capabilities, and Aspirations – recur in some or all the constructs. This emphasises the interrelatedness between them, i.e. not only does changes of aspects of one construct lead to changes of other concepts within this construct, it also leads to changes of the recurring concepts in other constructs. In short, it is thought that improvement in all constructs improve psychological empowerment.

To answer the research question of how the FSP in Gasaka affects caregivers' and children's empowerment, the focus of analysis is on families, caregivers and children. As the families are part of social relations, the analysis will focus partly on the changes experienced by people as individuals and partly on the changes as perceived within a group.

3. Methodology

This chapter provides the background to the philosophy of science adopted in this study followed by a description of the research design and the methods used to gather empirical data. Subsequently, ethical considerations and a discussion of access to the field are offered together with an explanation of the analysis of the empirical data.

3.1. Philosophy of science

Philosophy of science deals with the researcher perceives the world or the phenomenon studied (ontology) and how knowledge about the phenomenon arises (epistemology) (Egholm, 2014). To understand how the FSP in Gasaka affects caregivers' and children's empowerment, a pragmatic perspective is employed. The emphasis on action, experience and consequence within such a perspective provides an appropriate foundation for this study.

Ontologically, pragmatism may be either objective or subjective in the sense that the world either exists prior to our knowledge of it (objective) or it has a socially constructed reality (subjective) (Bechara & Van de Ven, 2007). Either way, the ontology is based on situational, processual, and relational aspects. That is, actions are performed in relation to other social actors, in a given situation, with former experiences influencing current actions and potential consequences.

The pragmatic epistemology is subjective and "insists that all knowledge arises out of physical sensations in specific situations" (Egholm, 2014: 169). It emphasises "the relations between knowledge and action – knowledge is 'truthful' to the extent that it is successful in guiding action" (Bechara & Van de Ven, 2007: 40). According to Egholm (2014), knowledge emerges when existing knowledge and habits prove inadequate to understand and explain a new experience.

"Pragmatism focuses on how experiences of previous situations affect and are applied to current actions, and the potential consequences of this" (Egholm, 2014: 169). Thus, an understanding of expectations based on previous experiences is required in order to describe current actions and their potential consequences. This focus on the consequences of social interactions based on expectations and experiences is situational, relational, and processual. This is relevant to the current study: by

understanding the caregivers' and children's social actions based on their experiences of various situations, it is possible to explain how the FSP affects their potential (dis)empowerment.

3.2. Research approach

The methods and techniques (methodology) used to gather the knowledge necessary to understand the selected phenomenon often vary according to the philosophy of science adopted and have consequences for the results of a given study (Bechara & Van de Ven, 2007). In accordance with pragmatism an abductive approach has been applied in this study. This has resulted in a constantly 'going back and forth' between the analysis of empirical findings and the development of the analytical framework. The purpose was to understand the changes in different situation in which the caregivers and children find themselves. The results are related to, and change with, specific situations, and therefore do not reveal universal truths (Egholm, 2014).

In addition to the abductive approach, a case study was produced. This served to develop the analytical framework and direct the search for empirical data. The usage of a case study within a pragmatic perspective may be justified with Easton's (2010) explanation "Clearly pragmatism can provide a very powerful justification for the use of case studies since case studies as a research method offer the possibility of studying a problem defined situation in great detail" (p. 119). These arguments suggest that the in-depth comprehension of the studied phenomenon that case studies provide is suitable for the understanding of the consequences of an individual's actions. The case study approach is presented below.

3.2.1. Case study

Case studies may take many forms and are utilised within various disciplines in the human and social sciences. In social sciences, they tend to be qualitative or cross-disciplinary, leading to a greater use of inductive or abductive methods rather than deductive methods (Bryman, 2001). The unique features and the in-depth understanding of the studied phenomenon obtained through case studies serve to enhance the validity and credibility of the study. Yet, the same elements are subject to critique; it has been argued that case studies lack generalisability and are merely useful as pilot methods for larger surveys (Flyvbjerg, 2011). As asserted by Bryman (2001) and Flyvbjerg (2011),

however, such criticisms are unjustified since well-written case studies comprise theoretical reasoning. They may serve to elucidate the connection between conceptual ideas and empirical data or to demonstrate the applicability of certain theories in specific contexts. This is the purpose of the current case study: to elucidate the ways in which the FSP in Gasaka affects caregivers and children and influences their empowerment.

According to Yin (2009), case studies may be categorised as explanatory, exploratory, or descriptive, and they may take the form of single or multiple-case studies. As the purpose of this study is to understand the ways in which caregivers and children are affected by the FSP, and how the Programme affects their potential empowerment process, this case study lies within the explanatory and descriptive categories. The case study examines the caregivers and children enrolled in the Programme. As the informants participating in the study are related through their enrolment in the Programme rather than through familiar relations, they represent what Yin (2009) refers to as embedded case units. The caregivers and children (case units) find themselves within a certain context, which in this case study is the Family Strenthening Programme. Within the Programme, caregivers and children are exposed to different interventions and they perform different activities. In accordance with the pragmatic perspective, it is the consequences of these interventions and activities and their influence on the caregivers' and children's empowerment that is subject of analysis.

3.3. Data collection

The data collected and used for analysis in this case study was collected within a period of three weeks in Gasaka, Rwanda. Access to the field was provided by SOS Denmark as a result of an internship completed before starting work on this study. Originally, the data collected was to be used for an internal report written during the internship, but SOS Denmark and SOS Rwanda agreed that the data could also be used in the current study. SOS Denmark was interested in the results of the internal report and this study, and because of their close relationship with SOS Rwanda, they were able to ask SOS Rwanda to establish contact with the study informants. They also asked SOS Rwanda to provide an interpreter with an understanding of the FSP and the situation of the families. Further discussion of access to the field is provided after the following section on data collection.

3.3.1. Designing the data collection

Three different approaches to data collection were adopted in this study: semi-structured group interviews, semi-structured individual interviews, and observations. These methods are based on qualitative research methods which, according to Bryman (2001), are the most typical methods used in case studies.

In qualitative studies, one of the purposes of interviews is to gather background information about the studied phenomenon (Willis, 2006); this was the purpose of the group interviews conducted for this study. Interviews were conducted with employees, volunteers, and Community Based Organisations (hereafter CBOs) working with the FSP on a weekly basis, and selected caregivers enrolled in the Programme. In addition, informal conversations with the employees were used to provide background information. The background information included information about the FSP, its interventions and other activities, employees', volunteers' and CBO members' experiences and expectations with the Programme, and about the families' conditions before and after their enrolment in the Programme. It served to guide the group interviews with selected children and the individual interviews with selected caregivers. The intention of these was to obtain in-depth information in order to explore the consequences of caregivers' and children's actions and how the FSP has affected their state of empowerment.

As mentioned above, all of the interviews were semi-structured. In general, semi-structured interviews are customised to allow the researcher to ask predetermined questions without determining the exact order or predicting the length or depth of the answers. This also allows the researcher to pursue interesting topics brought up by the interviewee (Willis, 2006). All semi-structured interviews are based on interview guides elaborated for each type of interview and are to be found in Appendix 1.

3.3.2. Interviews with employees

The two types of interviews were held with the employees (counting two social workers) assigned to the Programme; one semi-structured formal group interview conducted in the employees' office, and several informal conversations. The informal conversations took place between the different research activities and primarily with the employee who also played the role of interpreter (for an elaboration of this, see section 3.4.3). The two different kinds of interviews and the different ways

of conversing with the employees provided different kinds of information. The answers provided during the group interview seemed automated and formal, whereas the employees seemed more relaxed and reflective during the informal conversations.

Whatever the reason for the differences between the two types of conversation, the information obtained during the informal conversations is much more detailed, rich, and valuable than the formal information obtained from the group interview.

3.3.3. Group interviews with volunteers and Community Based Organisations

Apart from the employees, young volunteers and members of different CBOs assist and support the enrolled families. These people form the groups for the group interviews. The group of volunteers consists of young people, of whom one was previously enrolled in a development programme run by SOS and three were involved in the same programme as volunteers. This group assists the employees with family support and with organisational work related to the Programme. The members of a number of CBOs provide support to several Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) including SOS.

The group interview with the volunteers was conducted in the FSP office at the SOS Children's Village, whereas the three interviews with CBO members were conducted in the SOS Children's Villages school library.

The quality of the information obtained during these interviews varies, i.e. members from the same CBOs have different opinions about the support they offer the families and how they help SOS. Information obtained during these interviews is, nevertheless, valuable as it indicates the different opinions and experiences with the Programme. On the contrary, information obtained during the interview with the four volunteers is characterised by consensual explanations and opinions. Common for all interviews is that it seemed to be in the interviewees' best interest to provide sincere and honest information as a fair evaluation of the Programme would provide the families with the best support.

3.3.4. Group interviews with caregivers

The original intention of the group interviews with selected caregivers was to conduct focus groups to discuss the challenges faced by the families, their experiences with different interventions and activities, and their perception of the children's acceptance of the Programme. However, this did not prove possible since the caregivers answered all questions directly to the interpreter instead of engaging themselves in discussion. This could have been due to my unfamiliarity with working with an interpreter or with conducting focus groups. Instead of focus groups, the sessions comprised interviews that revealed some of the differences and similarities between the families' former and current situations, as well as a more concise description of the caregivers' perceptions of the initiation of the FSP, the concept of the VSLAs, and the ways in which the children benefit from the Programme.

Like the interviews with the CBO members, these interviews were held in the school library at the SOS Children's Villages. Based on observations made by the employees and volunteers, the interviewees participating in the two groups were selected according to the progress they had made within the first year of enrolment in the FSP: interviewees who had made great progress within the last year and who faced only a few challenges were grouped together in one group, while interviewees who faced more difficulties in their everyday lives were selected for the second group. The groups were separated in this way in order to obtain a nuanced picture of the families' experiences of the FSP. It was also hoped that this would prevent peer pressure, which, according to Lloyd-Evans (2006), can occur when powerful voices are allowed to set the agenda, and lead to controversial views being silenced.

Given the short period of time in the field, the semi-structured group interviews with employees, volunteers, CBO members, and selected caregivers were an appropriate method of gathering background information as they are less time consuming than long individual interviews. Furthermore, according to Lloyd-Evans (2006), informants may find strength in the comfort of being in a group. In this study, especially the caregivers seemed to find such strength and to be inspired by the other informants' considerations.

3.3.5. Individual interviews with caregivers

Individual interviews are thought to provide information about the interviewee's situation, allowing the researcher to interpret the phenomenon studied (Andersen, 2010). The purpose of the individual interviews conducted in this study was to obtain more specific information about the caregivers' situation before and after entering the Programme, their own views of their situation and any changes within their circumstances. Following an interview guide inspired by Most Significant Change (Davies & Dart, 2005) the caregivers were invited to reflect on challenging or pleasurable experiences, and enabled them to explain why they considered the experience significant in their current situation. The technique was intended to open up the interview and reveal situations in which the FSP had affected the caregivers' (dis)empowerment in regard to their development. The interview guide also included additional questions intended to further explore the caregivers' situation in relation to the subjects included in the analytical framework. This interview guide was semi-structured, taking into account the caregivers' interpretations of significant changes (Appendix 1).

As most experiences are perceived retrospectively, individual interviews provide what Andersen (2010) calls retrospective interview data. Such data include recalled experiences and there may be some negative consequences of this approach; the interviewee's perceptions and interpretations of their experiences may change over time and be presented either in a more positive or negative light. Yet, this consequence is considered tolerable for the purposes of this study, as the pragmatic approach adopted herein explores actions and experiences at any given time.

All of the individual interviews were conducted in the interviewees' own homes to make them feel more at ease. Another reason was that, as argued by Willis (2006), conducting interviews in the interviewees' own homes may give the researcher a chance to see the living conditions and any dynamics within the household. Willis (2006) also notes certain disadvantages, such as interruptions by children or neighbours wanting the interviewee's attention during the interview. Such interruptions provided a certain insight into the dynamics in the family, and it is therefore thought that the benefits outweighed the disadvantages.

After conducting the first eight interviews, I noticed a difference in the process the caregivers had seen within the first year of the FSP. In order to understand why some caregivers do not improve their living or why some caregivers act differently from other caregivers with the same abilities or

resources, I found it relevant to interview caregivers who struggle to live what they perceive as a valuable life. Three caregivers who the FS employees considered to be extremely vulnerable were included in the study. To compare the caregivers' state of development, their experiences and their challenges, it would have been preferable to have a larger number of extremely vulnerable caregivers. Due to the short period of time spent in Rwanda, this was not possible. Nevertheless, the information provided by all of the caregivers interviewed is considered relevant and trustworthy since it comprises an honest account of how they perceive their own circumstances as well as those of their neighbours and other caregivers within the FSP. Their statements serve to elucidate their experiences and how these may affect their (dis)empowering process.

3.3.6. Group interviews with children

To gain an understanding of the children's experiences of the FSP, three group interviews with selected children were conducted. Like the individual interviews with the caregivers, part of the interview guide produced for the children's group interviews was inspired by the Most Significant Change approach (Davies & Dart, 2005) whereas the other part covered subjects such as experiences with the FSP, and family conditions (Appendix 1).

The group interviews were conducted in the school library at the SOS Children's Village, a place known by all the children. Participating children were selected and grouped by age, in accordance with Ladegaard's (2009) description of children's gradual development of social and cognitive skills. This division was intended to focus the questions and vary the vocabulary used according to the children's development. The three interview groups were constituted as follows: children aged thirteen to seventeen; children aged thirteen to fifteen; and children aged ten to twelve.

The children found it easy to answer questions relating to individual and collective development, expectations about the future, and children's rights. All of the children enrolled in the FSP have received training on children's rights and many of their answers seemed to be automated and influenced by this training. On the contrary, when questions were asked on topics not directly relating to children's rights, it seemed that the youngest group of children had difficulties reflecting on the answers. In retrospect, the questions in the interview guide seemed more relevant for an older group, since the elder children gave relevant reflections about their former and current situations. In addition, in the first and third interviews, some of the children seemed to answer questions as they

thought it was expected of them, whereas others were too shy to enter the conversation. I have taken this into account in the interpretation of the interviews.

3.3.7. Ethical considerations

Before starting any interview, the informants were introduced to the interviewer, informed about the purpose of the interview, and given the opportunity to opt out before starting the interview. All informants were told they could interrupt or leave the interview at any point. This option was given for ethical reasons, as it was important that no one feel forced to participate in the study. Additionally, in accordance with van Blerk (2006), both the children and their caregivers were involved in the decision as to whether the children should participate in group interviews, and both parties gave informed consent. All of the interviewees were asked permission before recording the interviews: only once the interviewees agreed was the recorder turned on.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the interviewees' comments, all of the interviewees were promised confidentiality and anonymity so that any opinions they expressed would be anonymised and would not be linked to individual people. Maintaining anonymity and confidentiality was more of an issue when conducting group interviews and when using an interpreter. Even though I (as the interviewer) and the interpreter agreed not to pass on any information to third parties, there was no way to prevent interviewees from doing so.

The following sections present considerations about the selection of the interviewees, collaboration with SOS, and other issues related to access to the field and ethical considerations.

3.4. Access to the field

In Gasaka, a region with a long history of collaboration with NGOs, I found it helpful to collaborate with SOS because of their interest in the region and their wide acceptance among the local citizens. According to Mercer (2006), the local NGO often has a credibility which would take a long time for the researcher to build up.

In the following section, the advantages and disadvantages of conducting research in collaboration with an NGO will be examined. The selection of interviewees and work with gatekeepers will also be discussed. Finally, the issue of working with an interpreter will be dealt with.

3.4.1. Selection of informants

The collaboration with SOS proved to be an advantage in the process of selecting informants. The employees and volunteers helped to select informants for all of the above mentioned interviews. Their in-depth knowledge of the families and CBOs enabled them to contact caregivers, children, and CBO members who were likely to agree to participate in the study. This saved time and enabled me to take advantage of some of the recognition the employees and volunteers had generated in the local communities throughout the years.

There were, however, some disadvantages to asking the employees and the volunteers to choose the interviewees to participate in the study. One such disadvantage was that the caregivers and children may have felt obliged to give an interview. However, when I thanked the interviewees for their participation, they all smiled and gave the impression that they were pleased to be of help. Thus, there was no sense that they had participated unwillingly.

In addition, I was mainly introduced to caregivers who had seen great progress within the first year of the FSP even though I had expressed an interest in interviewing caregivers with different interests and facing different challenges. This may have limited my understanding of how the FSP affects the caregivers and children. In general, a case study based on a uniform group may provide in-depth information about that group (Yin, 2009) but it cannot explain why groups of people with similar abilities and resources exhibit different degrees of self-determination and empowerment. There are various possible reasons for the employees' choice of informants. According to Mercer (2006) NGOs may want to steer the study into a specific direction in order to meet their own agenda. This could be why I was mainly introduced to caregivers who had seen great progress. One way to deal with differences in agendas could be to select interviewees randomly. This method is often applied when selecting from a large sample of potential informants and allows the researcher to select a broad variety of informants (Bryman, 2001). In the current study, the number of families enrolled in the FSP did not seem large enough to ensure such a variety of informants. For this

reason, I chose to collaborate with SOS to select the interviewees, and I consider my collaboration a benefit rather than a constraint.

3.4.2. Working with an NGO

Potential disadvantages of collaborating with an NGO is the possibility of augmenting the number of gatekeepers due to the many stakeholders connected to the NGO. Gatekeepers can be defined as individuals who directly or indirectly facilitate or inhibit the study by providing or denying access to resources such as people, institutions, information, and logistics (Banks & Scheyvens, 2014). In the current study, gatekeepers were present at many levels. Firstly, the Danish programme coordinator initiated the first contact with the local employees in Rwanda. She was keen to gain insight that she herself had not yet had the time to obtain, and this resulted in her having a lot of ideas about the content of the study. Without this contact, access to the field would have taken a lot longer to establish; however, the process of taking stakeholders' interests into account could have been shorter. The Rwandan national programme coordinator also acted like a gatekeeper. He invited me to talk about my ideas and about the Programme in general. However, he also seemed to inform the employees what kind of families to ask to participate in the study. It is hard to say whether this was due to a conscious or unconscious desire to influence the data, to a different understanding of the agreement between me and the coordinator, or to something else entirely.

3.4.3. Lost in translation

When conducting the interviews and observing the VSLA meeting, I used an interpreter to introduce myself to the interviewees and to translate conversations and cultural differences. Such interpretation is often necessary in development studies as the researcher finds himself/herself in a context where he/she cannot speak the local language (Bujra, 2006). The interpreter used in this study was associated with the FSP as a social worker and was therefore familiar with the Programme, the volunteers, and many of the participants. This was helpful in gaining greater insight into the context of the FSP. However, it also had some negative impact.

Even though the interpreter may not have been in regular contact with the informants, he knew many of them due to his role as facilitator during Participatory Trainings or as a mediator during the

initiating process of the VSLAs. For this reason, the interpreter sometimes had additional information about the interviewees, especially the caregivers, which was offered before or after the interview. In some cases, this was helpful in order to better understand the situation of the family being interviewed. For ethical reasons, the information was only included in the study if the interviewee gave similar information as that provided by the interpreter. Furthermore, the relation between the informants and the interpreter comprise potential power relations in which the interpreter had more power than the informants. This may have influenced the interviewees' answers as they may have answered what they presumed the interpreter wanted to hear or they may have left out important information as a consequence of the interpreter's presence.

In addition, the usage of an interpreter may also affect the issue of promising informants confidentiality. In cases where the informants trust the interpreter, it may have raised the credibility of the interviewer. But in cases where the informants do not trust the interpreter, it may have compromised the relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee. However, even without the use of an interpreter, the interviewee could have been aware of the link between the interviewer and the people working for the Programme, which could also have compromised the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee making the interviewee hold back relevant information. This is a possibility that all researchers have to take into account when analysing data obtained through interviews, questionnaires and the like (Bryman, 2001). Nevertheless, as most of the informants in this study expressed gratitude for the support they had received from the FSP, they seemed pleased to 'repay' some of this by giving an interview. Thus, access to and acceptance from interviewees was facilitated by my collaboration with SOS and the interpreter.

During the interviews, the interpreter spoke Kinyarwanda with the interviewees and either French or English with the interviewer. Some sentences included a mix of English and French. As English and French are the second and third languages of both the interpreter and interviewer, the translation of all conversations may have changed the original meaning of the sentences. In addition, Bujra (2006) argues that the interpreter may, unwillingly, influence the conversation by attaching his own interpretation to the sentence. In an attempt to elude any misunderstandings or misinterpretations the interviews were conducted in a way that gave the interviewer, interviewee and interpreter the opportunity to ask questions whenever they did not understand the content or the purpose of a question or answer.

3.5. Analysis of data

The final part of this chapter presents the empirical data and explains the methods employed in analysing the data. These methods seek to describe, analyse, and interpret the changes experienced by the participating caregivers and children.

3.5.1. *Interviews*

In total six group interviews were conducted with employees (one), volunteers (one), CBO members (three), and caregivers (two), resulting in 12.3 hours of recorded interviews (Appendix 3). The eleven individual interviews with selected caregivers resulted in 10.8 hours of recordings and the three group interviews with children resulted in 3.7 hours of recorded interviews.

The two groups of caregivers consisted of widows/widowers, caregivers considered as singles (due to divorce, to the imprisonment of a husband, or because they had never been married), grandparents, and the eldest child of a household. All participants were considered the head of their household and played the role of caregiver for children enrolled in the FSP. The first group was composed of caregivers who had seen great progress within the first year of the FSP while the second group was composed of caregivers who still face challenges in providing their children with shelter and nutritious food. These interviews were transcribed, resulting in 44 pages of written text (Appendix 4).

Information about the caregivers who participated in the individual interviews is provided in Appendix 2. In terms of marital status, some of the caregivers interviewed were part of a couple, while others were widowed or single. They all had between two and six children of whome at least one would be enrolled in the FSP. Some caregivers had other children who were either too young or too old to be in the Programme. The individual interviews were transcribed resulting in 116 pages (Appendices 5 - 15).

The age and gender of the children that participated in the group interviews differed. The three groups were composed of: a) five girls and three boys aged thirteen to seventeen, b) three girls and three boys aged thirteen to fifteen, and c) four girls aged ten to twelve. All of the children were living with caregivers receiving support from the FSP and they had been enrolled from the beginning of the programme. An overview of the children who participated in the group interviews

is presented in Appendix 2. Only the first two interviews with the children were transcribed resulting in 39 pages (Appendices 16 & 17). The last group interview was also recorded but since it has largely been used as background information only those parts of the interview that were used as direct quotes in the analysis was transcribed.

3.5.2. Transcriptions

Kvale (2008) supports the process of transcription, as they offer the opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding of the content of a conversation between the interviewer and the interviewee. In the current study, the transcriptions of the interviews have enabled me to review the interviews, their content, and the interviewees' explanations of their experiences. Furthermore, the process of extracting similarities, differences, and significant content from the interviews was easier using the written text than the oral recordings.

As mentioned, the interviews were conducted in three languages. For practical reasons, the transcripts include only the French and English parts of the conversations. The French and English parts of the conversations have been left in their original form. Only when used as direct quotes have they been translated from French to English. Some English sentences have been changed to improve the understanding. If long quotes have been changed when inserting them in the analysis, the original quote is given in a footnote.

When transcribing the interviews, empirical categories to thematise and code the interviews emerged. The coding process is explained in the following subsection.

3.5.3. Coding

When analysing empirical data, coding may be an effective method of extracting and condensing the conversation between the interviewee and interviewer (Tanggaard & Brinkmann, 2010). To elicit how the FSP affects caregivers and children within a potential empowerment process, all interviews with caregivers and children were coded and thematised in two steps. The first step was theoretically driven whereas the second step was empirically driven.

In the first step, the interviews were thematised using the analytical framework based on concepts from the theories Empowerment and Self-Determination. These categories are illustrated in Table 3. The categories were intended to explain how caregivers and children enrolled in the FSP experienced changes in their circumstances.

During the second step, two empirically-driven categories were used to condense the interviews. The first category, FSP Interventions, explains how the caregivers and children perceived the interventions to be the root of change. The second contains Expressions used by the caregivers and children to describe elements leading to change. The codes for each of these categories are found in Table 3.

First step of coding/thematising – concept driven	
Concepts from Empowerment literature • Power • Choice • Aspiration • Changes to capabilities • Subjective well-being (N.B. this was later removed from the list)	Concepts from Self-Determination Theory • Perception of relatedness • Perception of autonomy • Perception of competence
Second step of coding/thematising – empirically driven	
FSP Interventions • Village Savings and Loans Association • Family Development Plan • Income Generating Activities • Participatory Training	Families' expressions • De-isolation • It boosted me to make a change • I have a saving spirit • Self-reliant

Tabel 3.1 Thematising the empirical data

This twofold process of thematising underlines the abductive approach applied in this study. The back and forth movement between data, literature, and analysis improved both the analytical framework and the analytical findings.

4. Rwanda and the Family Strengthening Programme

The following chapter will provide background information about Rwanda and the Gasaka sector followed by a description of SOS and its activities in the region. Finally, a presentation of the FSP, its programmes and other interventions will be provided.

4.1. Rwanda and the Gasaka Sector

Situated in central Africa, Rwanda covers an area of 26,338 km^2 and is landlocked between Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, and Uganda (Figure 4.1). It has a population of approximately 12.3 million people, of which 72.2% live in rural areas. It is one of the poorest country in Africa with 45% of the total population living below the official poverty line (CIA Gov, 2014). The severe situation facing the country has resulted in several organisations organising humanitarian and development activities in the country (NINGO Rwanda, 2013).

With more than half of the population living in rural areas, 90% of the population is engaged in subsistence agriculture (CIA Gov, 2014). This is the case for the population of Gikongoro Prefecture, Rwanda's South-western province in which Gasaka district is located. Most of the area is located at elevations above 1,800 metres. Despite a favourable rain pattern, the soil is hard to cultivate as most of the pastures in Gasaka are acidic and damaged by erosion. The dense population also makes it difficult for families to access land (IFAD, 2014). Few of the poor and vulnerable households have access to clean water or electricity. For many families, these conditions make them dependent on external support, as they do not have the resources to exploit the soil or to buy products imported from other districts.

4.1.1. The genocide in 1994

For many years the population of Rwanda was divided into three different ethnic groups: Tutsis, Hutus and Twa, with the Hutus as the middle and major group, the Tutsis as the top-level group and the Twa as the smallest and lower-level group. According to Desforges (1999), it was not until the Belgian Regime propagated the idea that Tutsis were superior of Hutus and Twa that the tensions between the ethnic groups turned into a settled struggle. As a result, Rwanda experienced a

dramatic genocide in 1994 with the killings of more than 500,000 people of which the majority were Tutsis (Desforges, 1999).

As mentioned in the introductory chapter, the genocide resulted in many men being imprisoned due to their participation in the war, and many women are infected by HIV due to systematic rapes (Ibid).

Shortly after the genocide, the government and other official bodies engaged in stabilising the country, its economy and the socialisation of the population. Twenty years after the genocide, the Rwandans still do their best to improve their living conditions and decrease the severe poverty that diffused in the aftermath of the genocide (Ibid).

4.2. SOS Children's Villages and the Family Strengthening Programme

SOS is a non-profit organisation which has been involved in humanitarian work with vulnerable children since 1954. The organisation originally supported children living in severe poverty with no, or very poor, care from their families, but in the early 20th century, the organisation expanded its activities to include development programmes that support whole families. With the introduction of Family Strengthening Programmes (FSPs), SOS aims to strengthen families, enabling them to support their children and change their living conditions. The focus is on school-aged children at risk of losing the care from their biological families. Because of their vulnerable situation, these children live in poor conditions, lack basic needs, and are often unable to participate in school activities as they lack the necessary school materials. The family members taking care of these children (referred to as Caregivers at SOS) often lack the abilities needed to support themselves, and to meet their children's essential needs. These are elements the FSP seeks to improve.

The families are selected in collaboration with the local communities, who identify families that are thought to be poor and vulnerable but also willing to make a change. These families all have children of school age. The children's primary caregiver(s) or the head of the household is part of the programme and is referred to as caregiver. In some cases, the head of the family is the eldest child, in which case, s/he is enrolled as caregiver and the rest of the siblings are enrolled as children. The family composition of the other families enrolled in the Programme include widows/widowers living alone with their children, single men or women living with their children,

women married to imprisoned husbands and living alone with their children, and finally grandparents living either with their children and grandchildren or only their grandchildren.

Before entering the FSP, most of the families support themselves through subsistence agriculture and temporary jobs. After entering the Programme, many still rely on subsistence agriculture but also start selling vegetables, own productions of sogum or banana beer, or small items from small shops or the market.

An integrated part of the FSP is the interventions that employees and volunteers offer to the families with the aim of strengthening the families' capacity. The following information about these interventions is based on the informants' experiences and their subjective explanations of the interventions rather than on objective information provided in a SOS publication.

Participatory Training

From the beginning of the FSP, both caregivers and children are invited to participate in workshops that cover topics relevant to the families' development. The content and the sequence of the workshops are chosen by the employees, based on an interpretation of the most significant challenges facing the families. These include such issues as human and children's rights, income generating activities, hygiene and sanitation, nutrition, family planning, how to deal with conflict, and the importance of education. The workshops are divided into a tutorial part and a participatory part. During the tutorial part, information about a selected topic is provided. The participatory part then allows the participants to discuss and explore the topic in detail. To support the implementation and usage of the discussed topics, employees, volunteers, and CBO members visit the families on regular basis. During these visits, the families receive supervision on how to improve their lives by implementing the elements learned during the training. The home visits also aid the development of Family Development Plans.

Family Development Plans

Family Development Plans (FDPs) are produced to support the families' development. They consist of agreements between the families and the employees. According to the caregivers, the purpose is to support the families in gradually changing their living conditions. The FDPs are renewed and adjusted regularly according to each family's situation (see Interviews no. 6 & 9).

Village Savings and Loans Associations

Facilitated by employees and volunteers, all of the families are grouped into Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) consisting of approximately 15 members. According to one of the caregivers, one member from each family joins the VSLA and they elect a president, secretary and other leaders from within the group (see Interview no. 6). The members of the VSLAs meet weekly and buy what they refer to as weekly shares. The price of one share varies between the individual VSLAs, but no member may buy more than five shares per week. These shares make up the families' savings and they are disbursed once a year during the so called phase out.

At each weekly meeting, incoming money from the shares are offered as loans to the members. Again, individual agreements within the VSLAs determine the period of the loans. The empirical data shows that the loans are mainly used to develop Income Generating Activities (see description below) or to improve their living conditions.

Income Generating Activities

One of the first topics discussed during the Participatory Training sessions is how to start new, or improve existing, Income Generating Activities (IGA). These activities are an important way for families to change their living conditions. Besides providing the opportunity to buy weekly shares, the income from the IGA is used to feed the family, purchase other necessary goods, and improve their housing.

School materials

To enable children to participate regularly in school activities, all children attending the Nine Year Basic Education are provided with notebooks, schoolbags, and uniforms. To receive these items, the children must attend school on a regular basis.

The above-mentioned interventions form the major activities within the FSP. Each intervention seems to support the caregivers and children in different ways and brought together they seem to cover elements of economic, social, and psychological support. During these activities caregivers and children may interact turning the interventions into social settings. It is by examining the actions, experiences and perceived changes within these social settings that the research question will be answered.

5. Analysis

In this chapter, the analytical framework will be employed with the aim of coming to an understanding of how the FSP affects caregivers' and children's empowerment. Using the empirical data, changes perceived by the caregivers and children, respectively, will be analysed by applying the three constituents of the framework; namely, Supportive environments, Capabilities, and Aspirations.

The first part of this chapter presents an analysis of the caregivers and is divided into three sections that examine: how the caregivers establish supportive environments and how these affect the caregivers' perceptions, preferences and (lack of) actions; how changes in the caregivers' capabilities enable them to make purposeful choices and to change their perception of competences and increase their 'power within'; and how the caregivers manage (or don't manage) to use supportive environments, their increase in capabilities, and the ability to envisage opportunities in order to set short and long term goals.

The analysis of the children presented in the second part of the chapter is divided into three sections that examine: how the children support and are supported by significant others and how this improves their 'power with' and 'power within'; how the children perceive their access to school activities as a means of enhancing their capabilities; and how changes within the household and access to scholastic materials enable the children to envisage a different world and how this improves their 'power within'.

The chapter is brought to a close by bringing together the analyses of the caregivers and the children.

5.1. Supportive environments for the caregivers

A change experienced by many caregivers is that they no longer feel isolated. Many caregivers comment that participating in Participatory Training and VSLAs means they no longer stay at home. They view the regular home visits by FS staff as supportive and many of the caregivers feel less isolated. Maria explains it as follows: "One of the things that happened to me that made a significant change to me was to be enrolled in the FSP...It pulls me from isolation and I have

regular visits from the staff. My heart is now free" (Maria: 1, 9). In the following section, the caregivers' experiences of their meetings with FS employees and other caregivers are analysed in terms of feelings of relatedness and the development of supportive environments.

5.1.1. The supportive environment and the 'extended family'

Being enrolled in the FSP entails interaction with people the caregivers would not otherwise have been in contact with. The caregivers' perception of and comments about their interactions with FS staff and other caregivers vary, but they all seem to have one thing in common; all of the caregivers seem to benefit from these interactions and they feel more secure and competent due to the relations they have established.

Babette's experience illustrates the benefits of interaction with FS staff and other caregivers. Babette lives alone with her five children (two biological children and three other orphaned children). She views the FSP as an extended family that supports her in developing and supporting herself: "SOS is as a family" (Babette: 7, 22). She continues: "The family I have got has prepared me to be self-reliant…When they selected me and put me in the Programme, they created a good environment, especially the savings groups" (Ibid: 7, 24). It seems that she finds herself in different supportive environments established or initiated by the Programme and that she sees the VSLA as particularly supportive of her development. She is convinced that staying in these supportive environments will facilitate the changes that they all need: "I hope we will continue with the infrastructure that SOS has set…If we keep on working in the savings groups I think we will achieve many things" (Ibid: 8, 4). This illustrates that Babette has realised that when people work together they can achieve things they could not have managed on their own. This may be one of the reasons why she hopes the caregivers will continue the interventions initiated by the FSP.

Through the VSLA, Babette meets other caregivers with whom she relates to and trusts. She notes that the caregivers in her VSLA support each other by discussing social and private matters: "Actually, what we do, we focus on issues that are difficult to handle. For example, if someone has a kind of a trauma, we give a kind of counselling. We focus on psycho-social support. For example, we had a member of the savings group who had lost a child. And we gave psycho-social support and fortunately he found that child" (Ibid: 4, 26). The support Babette receives through the VSLA and from FS employees gives her confidence and alters her perception of competence. This may be

compared to the psycho-social support Karbo and Mutisi (2008) recommend as psychological and social recovery for people with wartime memories. It gives her the 'power to' support others: "I know my capacity has been strengthened by different training, either in the savings group or at SOS. What I can't forget; I was really regretful and I asked myself 'why did I have these children?'...The change I registered is that they helped me to help my biological children and those children, those orphans, because I was starting to regret that I decided to take them [the orphaned children]" (Babette: 5, 3). Babette's comments indicate that her interactions with other people from the FSP are supportive and psychologically empowering, allowing her to find the 'power within' to support herself and her children as well as the 'power to' support people with whom she relates.

Another benefit of the VSLAs is that they allow the caregivers to discuss ways to handle different issues. Frida, for example, sees the VSLA as an opportunity to discuss development opportunities, and this gives her encouragement: "When we are with the SOS savings group we talk about some issues of our own development...We build relationships...It increases my morale because when I am with the others I don't feel lonely or stigmatised. And it gives me a feeling of hope – hope for the future" (Frida: 5, 15). Frida's comments indicate a sense of relatedness to the other caregivers; a relatedness based on feelings of belonging, being respected, and interaction with people whose values she respects. According to Ryan and Deci (2000b), such relationships satisfy the psychological need of relatedness. It is thought that this has enhanced Frida's morale and her confidence in being able to meet the challenges facing her, i.e. her 'power within'.

The cases of Babette and Frida indicate that the caregivers benefit from the support they provide to one another and the support they receive from FS employees. The interventions in which the caregivers interact with each other can be seen as supportive environments. These environments encourage the caregivers to establish relationships through which they expand their 'power within' and further develop their 'power with' and 'power to' support one another.

5.1.2. Supportive environments and intrinsic motivation

Once the caregivers become more confident many of them also become able to relate to their activities with curiosity and autonomy. Some caregivers even seem to have found new energy with which they engage in their activities.

Babette and Maria explain that being participants in the FSP not only gave them the capital to start their businesses but also gave them the necessary encouragement. Babette explains: "I had different ideas, but it [being part of the FSP] boosted me to start the business" (Babette: 4,15). Maria had a similar explanation: "I work more. Being at SOS was a boost. You know, I am alone; the children have no father. It was a boost to work more" (Maria: 6, 19). These quotes indicate that receiving the necessary help inspired Babette and Maria to change their behaviour. According to Ryan and Deci (2000a; 2000b), supporting environments (e.g. those provided by teachers or tutors) often have a positive influence on development and motivational behaviour. If one regards the FSP as a supportive environment with the FS employees and volunteers as supporting tutors, the motivation to start new activities can then be seen as a behavioural change facilitated by the employees. The following quote by Maria supports this idea: "They [the FS Staff] were like my parents and I am happy with the collaboration with them" (Maria: 6, 24). This quote can be interpreted in a number of different ways. When Maria says she will do anything they like, it may suggest that she has designated the FS staff the role of a significant other, to whom she would not like to lose face. It may also point to a supportive environment established by the FS employees that encourages the caregivers to explore their opportunities within the supportive context. The former may facilitate behaviour correlating with what the caregivers perceive to be expected of them while the latter may lead to the caregivers exploring their capabilities e.g. in order to improve, expand, or start new businesses. This latter process of exploring opportunities and capabilities is more likely when the caregivers are internally rather than externally regulated.

Motivation from supportive environments only leads to internal regulation or intrinsic motivation when feelings of autonomy are accompanied by perceptions of competence and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). As such, caregivers who have not obtained the skills required to achieve the change they are working for may not have sufficient perception of competence or may not feel autonomous in their decisions and therefore do not develop internal autonomous regulations such as identification and integration. Catharine is one such caregiver who lacks perceptions of autonomy, competence and relatedness. She cultivates a piece of rented land and works as a daily labourer in the neighbouring fields, which brings in almost enough for her to feed her two children and to save the minimum amount agreed by the members of her VSLA. Catharine is clearly aware of her difficulty finding the means to save and she seems to lack feelings of competence: "It [The weekly amount] is a lot of money for me but it is not a lot for the others. I try to make sacrifices but it is difficult" (Catharine: 4, 17). Even though she finds it difficult, she perceives the VSLA as

supportive: "I still love it… They help me with the way I make decisions" (Ibid: 6, 17).This indicates that she has internalised the values imbedded in the VSLA's customs. Making 'sacrifices' could be an indication of her positive attitude towards savings, i.e. that she has an interest in saving because she has internalised the values. On the other hand, it could also be an indication of external expectations to which she responds with external regulation. This is in line with a guide on VSLAs (Care International, 2001) stressing that peer pressure encourage VSLA members saving rather than spending their money. The following quote supports this interpretation: "The savings group is very strict" (Catharine: 4,17). If Catharine is saving because of expectations and agreements made by the other members of the VSLA, she can be viewed as external regulated. In short, being in the group motivates her to do her best by finding the means to feed her children and save money, but she is acting out of internalised expectations and not out of an inner interest.

5.1.3. Supportive relationships with neighbours

As well as the support they receive from home visits, Participatory Training and VSLAs, some of the caregivers have established supportive environments within their local communities. Some of these environments are made up of relationships which allow neighbours to generate 'power with' in order to support each other's development, while in others, some people have the 'power to' support others (with caregivers either as the supportive or the supported).

Frida is one such person who has started sharing her experiences with her neighbours. Together they have built a relationship based on mutual trust which allows them to support each other in different ways: "We have a good relationship. You have seen how the children of my neighbours are free in my house…What I have learned from my neighbours is to put cement on the outside walls [of my house]. They say if you don't put cement on the wall may fall down…" When talking about a neighbour, she says: "The woman learned from me. I trained her to love VSLA because I know savings groups are important to me. Currently, that woman is part of a savings group..." (Frida: 9, 1). By sharing their experiences, the people living in the neighbourhood support one another to develop to their full potential. As Frida explains, the neighbours have shown her how to improve the construction of her house while she has passed on her knowledge about VSLAs. It is interesting to consider whether this relationship is merely based on the neighbours' individual 'power to' support the others or a collective generated 'power with' enabling them to achieve their

interests. The quote above does not suggest that she and the neighbours seek mutual development; rather the relationship is based on a mutual interest in seeing the others develop according to their potential.

Another example of a caregiver passing on his experiences to the local community is Francois. He is the president of his VSLA and believes in the concept of savings associations. As well as adopting the values of his VSLA himself, Francois tries to use savings associations to help others achieve their aims. He explains: "…the VSLA where I am president, it is running well. Because it is a VSLA for beneficiaries of the SOS, other people who are not in the project cannot join. But they asked me to create their own VSLA and the VSLAs are operating…I have already created two other associations…these VSLAs are running well" (Francois, 9: 14). It can be concluded that Francois has the 'power to' support others. Rowlands (1997) sees 'power to' as a person having an interest in seeing others develop, but another factor may be at play here: supporting other people's development seems to give caregivers such as Francois greater feelings of competence because of the results they have facilitated. The following quote supports this argument: "I think my behaviour helped my neighbourhood a lot. In addition, even in the other associations of SOS they trust me and they call upon me to help them… It is good and I am proud of that" (Francois: 9, 22; 10, 16). This can also be seen as generating feelings of relatedness, as caregivers like Francois perceive themselves as part of a group. Such feelings are thought to facilitate self-determination (Ryan & Deci, 2000a; 2000b), which is why the caregivers may be regarded as having the 'power to' support others to be motivated to develop and support their families and neighbours.

As the two cases above illustrate, some caregivers feel competent to enter supportive relationships and to establish supportive environments. However, not all caregivers have the 'power to' influence others outside the FSP, and some do not have neighbours with whom they can generate 'power with' in order to achieve collective changes. One such example is Merenda, who lives alone with her five children. Apart from being employed as a daily labourer, she receives occasional support from her neighbours. It seems that she benefited most from this support when her husband was imprisoned five years ago: "When my husband was put in prison these children were too small, but I got helped by my neighbours. When he got imprisoned this child was two months...I suffered so much and I lacked some food to send him in the prison, but neighbours helped me. They continued to provide me food" (Ibid: 4,14). Since entering the FSP, Merenda has occasionally seen her children receiving food and clothes from the neighbours. Even though she regards the neighbours'

behaviour as supportive, it does not seem to foster a supportive environment enabling Merenda to improve her capabilities. The support provided by the neighbours does not represent support based on their 'power to' facilitate a development process: rather, it may be seen as mere generosity. Therefore, if Merenda is to be encouraged to develop and change her livelihood a supportive environment must be found elsewhere. This illustrates the fact that caregivers may feel supported by or even relate to FS staff or VSLA members but this is not necessarily the case with helpful people outside the FSP.

5.1.4. Summary

As the analysis above illustrates, supportive environments consist of people ready to support and facilitate others who are ready to be supported. Environments that engender feelings of relatedness and competence are those that facilitate advancement and feelings of autonomy. Supportive environments influence caregivers to internalise norms and values that are of use in their own development. Those caregivers who master the activities of saving and interacting with other caregivers, and who have fully internalised the ideas and values of the supportive environments are also able to generate supportive environments outside the FSP, and it is concluded that they are intrinsically motivated to do so.

5.2. The caregivers' Capabilities

The most common change experienced by the caregivers is that they have managed to improve their income generating activities, either by changing the methods used in their business or agriculture or by exchanging one activity for another. According to many of the caregivers, these changes have occurred due to their enrolment in the FSP, since it has enabled them to increase their economic capital (through loans in the VSLA) and improved their ability to organise their work and optimise their workload. In the following section, changes in the caregivers' activities will be analysed in terms of economic income and human, social and psychological capabilities. The analysis seeks to elucidate the caregivers' self-determination and self-regulation towards change, and to understand whether changes in activities and capabilities enable the caregivers to make purposeful and desirable choices.

5.2.1. Capabilities – economic income and human resources

Before entering the FSP, many caregivers relied on temporary jobs that often combined heavy work and an uncertain income. After entering the Programme, these caregivers were encouraged to think of ways to change their temporary jobs for more stable income generating activities. Other caregivers were supported to make changes in their living conditions by improving the houses they live in or by changing other facilities in and around the house.

Maria, for example, has started her own micro business. She lost her husband six years ago and is now living alone with her four children. Since enrolling in the programme, she has managed to change all of her former income generating activities for new and more profitable ones: "...before entering the Programme I was reliant on temporary jobs, I was employed by other persons" (Maria: 7, 25). Since entering the FSP, she has accessed economic capital and has received training relevant to her different activities: "After learning how to save, I started keeping livestock. I already have two goats and that project is growing bigger. That is due to how I performed my work and how I performed my savings...It was difficult in the beginning because there was no means. But with a loan from the savings group I started making banana beer and I earn money" (Ibid: 3, 7). This indicates that Maria perceives the changes in her activities as a result of the loans obtained from the VSLA and the training received from the FSP.

The loan Maria obtained from the VSLA may be seen as a turning point since this access to financial support enabled her to start her business. In addition, the training she received from the FSP has allowed Maria to turn her business into a profitable one. She has used this profit to engage in further activities either to generate income or increase the amount of agricultural products consumed in the family. Her success with banana beer production has motivated her to explore new options for additional activities such as keeping livestock. Her interest in seeing her business grow is thought of as a spontaneous interest and inner curiosity rather than an instrument to development. Additionally, Maria is in a position where she may choose between different alternatives in order to manage her business: "I employ one person, sometimes three, to cultivate. I no longer cultivate myself" (Maria: 7, 11). She may also reject different propositions if they do not fit into her business plan. When asked if she would like to merge with other banana beer producers, she replies: "If it is one person I cannot accept. If it is two, three, five persons that come and say 'we join you, we

package our beer together' I can accept" (Ibid: 7, 19). This is a sign that Maria is making choices based on her own analysis of the situation and according to her own interest. It can be concluded that Maria has expanded her capabilities as she has become able to manage a profitable business, which increases her potential to lead a life she values.

Apart from making changes within their income generating activities, some caregivers spend a lot of time on activities within the household. Babette, for example, has initiated different projects that are all linked to her enrolment in the FSP. She explains that she is using loans obtained through the VSLA to make improvements to her house and she has an adjacent house under construction. In addition, she has left her former temporary job to set up a small business selling products to customers: "…the loans I get from SOS have helped me start a business" (Babette: 2, 20). In addition to the loans, Babette links the changes she has experienced to the Participatory Training she received: "…there were different training sessions which I attended and that has developed my way of thinking…They trained us to use the loans properly; to make a kind of budget" (Ibid: 4, 25). Babette sees the training as relevant to the way she manages her shop and the other projects she has initiated. Until recently, her business was profitable: "It was going well and I was able to pay the rent, and the extra money was going on the family" (Ibid: 4, 1). This shows that Babette managed to make changes through a combination of new skills and access to capital. As such, it may be concluded that she has extended her capabilities and thereby improved her ability to lead a life she values.

The improvement in Babette's financial situation has also enabled her to make different choices about the changes and improvements she wishes to make to her home. She uses a lot of energy improving her houses: "The other house is still under construction, it is not yet used…I plan two things with it; either I will use it as a shop myself or I will rent it for someone else's shop" (Babette: 10, 6). This comment supports the argument that she has expanded her capabilities and her ability to make purposeful choices. Yet, at the time of the interview, Babette had given up the facilities where she had housed her small shop: "The shop I was renting, suddenly the owners increased the price. And then I stopped. But I am still looking for a new shop, and when I find one, I will continue selling my products" (Ibid: 3, 16). Babette has enhanced her capability to make managerial decisions, which is now useful when analysing the best location for her new shop; "I would prefer it if the house was situated near the road and near the central market" (Ibid: 8, 11). However, she is still not capable of reacting immediately to sudden (unfavourable) changes in her financial situation,

and as she does not have any alternative facilities for her shop, she can actually be seen as disempowered (i.e. she is not in an economic position to choose according to her preferences). The following quote supports this interpretation: "The most difficult thing today is that I have no place to sell my business products. I am still looking for a house" (Ibid: 8, 8).

Despite the fact that Babette is still vulnerable to sudden changes and the fact that finding a location for her small business is her biggest challenge at the moment, she does seem to have the capability to make decisions on a long term basis. Her comment about the potential uses for the adjacent house shows that she is analysing her situation and considering which solution is the best for her. Whichever solution she chooses will improve her chances of restarting her shop, either because the adjacent house will give her direct access to shop facilities or because she will be able to use the money from the rent to pay for her own facilities elsewhere. As such, her decision to construct another house improves her alternatives and thereby her decision making in the long run. Nevertheless, the sudden change in her circumstances shows that Babette – and other caregivers like her – remain vulnerable to decisions made by more powerful people. To put it differently, the more resources the caregivers possess, the more capable they are to advance and improve their livelihoods.

5.2.2. Psychological capabilities and self-determination

Success in their micro or small businesses seems to give the caregivers a perception of competence which motivates them to work harder. They view this success as a result of their hard work combined with capabilities gained through the Participatory Training. Maria explains: "When we joined the Programme, they trained us and encouraged us to work more and plan for the future of our children. It is due to the training that we know how to work more. I was working but since entering the Programme I now know how to work more" (Maria: 6, 22). Many of the caregivers have internalised the idea of working hard, because they believe it will lead to development. Maria continues: "If you work more, you achieve more; if you invest more, you gain access to more things" (Ibid: 7, 5). Thus, it may be concluded that Maria perceives herself as empowered as she is able to make decisions according to her own interest.

Babette also comments that the training has had an influence on her current situation. As mentioned above, Babette believes she has become more competent in managing her business and her household. When it comes to generating new ideas, she explains that the training has enabled her to think more creatively: "They [ideas] come from my mind but I can add that there were different training sessions which I attended that developed my way of thinking" (Babette: 4, 25). Babette believes the training has influenced her ability to use her capabilities more purposefully. Being able to organise and take advantage of existing capabilities can be regarded as social and psychological capabilities (Narayan, 2005). As such, being part of the FSP has improved Babette's social and psychological capabilities.

According to Ryan and Deci (2000a; 2000b) optimally challenging activities encourage and motivate people to explore ways of handling the challenges imbedded in these activities. Maria and Babette are both examples of caregivers who have been motivated to explore ways of handling challenges and opportunities imbedded in their newly started activities. It is thought that caregivers like Maria who have breathed new life into their businesses or started new activities perceive their activities as optimally challenging. As Maria explains, she is only willing to start an association or merge with other banana beer brewers under the right circumstances to improve her business. This is an example of caregivers being intrinsically motivated, as they search for new experiences and adventures enabling them to come up with new and more interesting solutions for their businesses. On the other hand, caregivers like Babette who are inspired to follow new opportunities but are restricted by their economic situation or capabilities are more likely to perceive these challenges as too difficult to handle. The fact that Babette perceives the lack of a shop as the biggest challenge she is facing at the moment, shows that she is dependent on previous experiences of success to empower her psychological capabilities. If caregivers like Babette believe they will succeed and perceive their activities as optimal challenges, it will help them stay motivated. But if they perceive their efforts as failures and challenges as restricting their opportunities, this will compromise their feelings of competence and autonomy. This will ultimately make them feel alienated from their own activities and make them extrinsically motivated or even amotivated.

In short, when caregivers are empowered both economically and psychologically, they are more able to make purposeful choices. They are also more likely to perceive themselves as competent, which in turn fosters feelings of autonomy when making decisions. Caregivers who feel competent and autonomous are more likely to be intrinsically motivated to follow their ideas and they are more

likely to believe they will succeed in their activities; meanwhile, caregivers who lack economic resources and human capabilities are more likely to feel negatively about their own capabilities and therefore stop generating new ideas.

5.2.3. Summary

Since enrolling in the FSP, the caregivers have seen changes in their income generating activities. Some have managed to improve their activities to a degree of which they have become independent of others'. They are capable of making decisions according to their own interest, they are intrinsically motivated to develop their business, and they are capable of choosing to do so. Others are more vulnerable to external conditions. They are obliged to choose among few alternatives (and in some cases from none at all). Those caregivers who manage to perceive obstacles imbedded in different activities or social settings as optimal challenges are more likely to stay intrinsically motivated and to improve their conditions. On the contrary, caregivers who perceive the obstacles too challenging are expected to give up their activities and their aim of development.

5.3. The caregivers' Aspirations

Another issue discussed by the caregivers is their ability to set goals and to work towards the achievement of these goals. Some goals seem to be set as a result of the training received in the Participatory Training sessions, some are set according to the agreements in place in the VSLAs, some are set in accordance with the Family Development Plans produced by FS employees, and others are set individually as the caregivers gradually develop the skills and the 'power within' to do so. These different types of goals influence the families' behaviour in the sense that the caregivers have started making plans, many of the caregivers have started thinking differently, and the families have started aspiring to the future. These three changes are analysed below.

5.3.1. The ability to set realistic goals

As a part of their development process, the caregivers have learned to make plans. Some caregivers have increased their capability to make long term plans whereas others still have simple aspirations,

which leads to short term decision making. Therese views plans as a motivator or a target to aim for: "When you have a goal it is like a target and you try, you do your best to reach the target" (Therese: 7, 20). This is an example of how optimally challenging activities lead people to do their best. The opposite occurs when the challenges people face are more than they are capable of handling; they stop believing they will succeed and they often quit the activity (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

The agreements made within the VSLA and in the caregivers' individual Family Development Plans guide and encourage the caregivers to set and meet goals. In both contexts, the caregivers are being judged as to whether they are able to meet the agreements and thereby the expectations of others. According to Self-Determination Theory, this may be regarded as external motivation, i.e. that the caregivers are being externally regulated rather than following the agreements out of an inner interest or intrinsic motivation. However, in many cases the caregivers seem to appreciate the guidance in setting new goals. Therese who has already met many of the goals in her Family Development Plan is one such example. She believes that: "When they [the FS staff] set this kind of agreement it is to build the spirit...it is a kind of building and planting spirit. For example, if you plan to put cement on this house, SOS is there to oversee if the cement is put on. So it is a kind of planning" (Therese: 6, 17). Thus, the caregivers are facilitated to set goals and to make plans. In many cases the caregivers seem to look forward to the disbursement during the next VSLA phase out or to the following loan they have planned to obtain. This indicates that the caregivers also have an internal curiosity to realise these agreements and fulfil the activities that have been made possible by the saved or borrowed money. And as they increase their capacity and learn to set goals according to their capabilities, they become capable of achieving their aspirations. Thus, if the agreements are in line with the caregivers' competences and if they are able to influence the agreements allowing them to feel autonomy in the process, the caregivers may perceive the agreements as optimally challenging goals, which in turn engenders intrinsic motivation.

Claudine is one such an example. She has many ideas relating to constructing a house for her and her children, expanding her small shop, and improving her business at the market. Yet, she is aware that she does not have the financial means to realise her ideas. She therefore believes that an increase in the weekly shares at the VSLA will enable her to realise her ideas sooner. As one of the leaders of her VSLA, she knows that VSLAs in Rwanda cannot have more than five weekly shares and therefore she is trying to convince the other members of the group to increase the value of each

share; "… we are planning to increase the share, but she [a member of the VSLA] was refusing. And I was asking her: how will you construct your own house if you don't increase your weekly share? … And that woman said: Ah, it is impossible to construct my own house. And I tried to calculate how much she consumes each day; how many bottles of beer she consumes per day, and I turned that amount of bottles into money per day. I tried to calculate how possible it is to construct her own house" (Claudine, 7: 28). This indicates that Claudine is able to visualise and plan how she or others may realise their ideas; it shows that she is willing to encourage or even persuade others to agree with her plans in order to achieve her aspirations. She seems to believe that anyone can develop if they make some sacrifices and prioritise as she does.

Even though Claudine seems to be able to aspire and visualise how to achieve her goals, she does not seem to have the patience to wait for the changes she has planned. Towards the end of the interview she argues: "It could be very important if I had added capital; a larger amount to increase the capital because I have different project ideas" (Ibid: 9, 19), and she argues that the added capital should come from the FSP. "It will motivate me because I am at the starting line. It can help me. If you invest more you gain more, if you invest less you gain less" (Ibid: 11, 15). These last comments indicate that Claudine is eager to change her current situation and improve her activities in order to realise the plans she has made and reach the goals she has set. However, they may also indicate that she may not have enough patience to wait for the process of change she has started. If she continues to perceive that capital should be funded by external donors, she keeps herself in a dependent position. As the current FSP does not offer the caregivers such grants, she is not likely to obtain the external capital she is hoping for. Therefore, she risks developing negative feelings or even despair. On the contrary, if she manages to turn her ideas into positive aspirations and long term goals she is more likely to be able to make plans according to her capabilities. She may feel more autonomous and competent in her planning, which would lead to positive loops of success and enable her to make even more goals.

Unfortunately, not all of the caregivers have managed to improve their capabilities enough to make the kind of changes they have started aspiring to. Merenda is one such example. She has realised that someday she will be able to extend her home: "For example, next Wednesday when we phase out I will buy trees and I will start thinking about how to expand the rooms of my house". However, she is also aware of her lack of capabilities and that it will take a lot of effort for her to realise her dream of extending the house. "The problem will be the roofing; I will need iron sheets" (Merenda:

6, 16). Even though she has gained a spirit of planning how to use her savings, and even though she has been introduced to the idea of aspiring to change, she still lacks the means to achieve the goals she has set. This could indicate that she aspires to more than she can possibly reach in the near future and that she still needs guidance in order to set realistic goals. If this is the case, and if she is not being helped to set realistic goals by the FS employees or by the other caregivers, she will more easily fall into a negative loop of despair where failure leads to feelings of inability or incompetence which in turn lead to demotivation and psychological disempowerment.

In short, caregivers who are able to aspire to the future according to their capabilities are more likely to set realistic short or long term goals enabling to achieve their aims. Those caregivers with sparse resources will achieve their aims at a slower pace than caregivers with a greater capacity. Yet, as they have accepted their situation, they are concluded to be capable of succeeding. On the contrary, caregivers who are not able to accept their current situation, and the speed of which they realise their goals are at risk of being disillusioned, to lose their perception of competence and become psychologically disempowered.

5.3.2. Changing the way of thinking

Creating goals that are optimally challenging is a challenge in itself. Some of the caregivers are not used to setting goals or challenging themselves with innovative thoughts. Other caregivers are trapped in a mind-set linked to unpleasant experiences in the past. For these reasons, they no longer have aspirations.

One example is Josephine. She remarks that before entering the FSP she took many things for granted without questioning the way she was leading her life. Josephine agreed to different goals as part of the Programme, and she perceives these goals as influencing her behaviour positively: "It helped me because I had no door and to me it was normal. I had no fence and to me it was normal". This shows that Josephine has managed to change her mind-set. As part of the changed mind-set, she has started to set goals: "I have planned. We set goals with SOS and in accordance with those goals I plan…if after three months you do not meet the goals, the staff come and you renew again. Generally we don't achieve what we agreed but most of our agreement is respected" (Josephine: 6, 18). Even though she may not achieve her goals within the first three months, she believes she will succeed after a number of renewals. She has become more confident and realises that she has the

physical and financial means to change her living conditions. She has gradually started experimenting and developing ideas and aspirations of how to continue her development; "Generally," she notes, "it can be difficult due to our low capacity, but I try" (Ibid: 7, 5). In this way, Josephine expands her 'stock of experiences', which motivates her to make new and more widespread plans for the maintenance of her house. The change in her mind-set can be seen to have empowered her psychologically, which has facilitated an interest in her own development.

Other caregivers also note how the FSP has helped them to forget their unpleasant past and encouraged them to focus on the future. Francois is a case in point. He lost his first wife during the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo and even though he married his second wife just after his return to Rwanda his wartime memories seem to haunt him: "Personally, the project helped me; SOS restores my confidence. I was somehow hurt due to the war of Rwanda but after entering the project, the project restored confidence. You know my first wife went away and that was very difficult for me. So SOS restores confidence, restores life in my inner part...No one could help me because my mind-set was really linked to my past. But due to different training I no longer refer to my bad past" (Francois: 4, 16). This shows that Francois was trapped in a negative state which prevented him from taking part in the positive things occurring around him. The training has provided him with comfort and knowledge that he can use in his everyday life.

Gradually, as Francois realises that his newly gained knowledge may improve his capabilities, he starts believing things can be different: "Due to the collaboration with my wife...there is no poverty in my family. We have so many products – crops – and the spare products are sent to the market" (Ibid: 4, 12). This has given him a sense of competence and enhanced his self-respect, which has enabled him to start believing in a more positive future. Further, with restored confidence, Francois has generated enough 'power within' to believe that changes may happen and he has managed to develop new and more effective cultivation methods: "...you know the way Rwandese cultivate sweet potatoes? It is an old method. But I have discovered a method. I personally discovered the way. [He explains how to use fabric in the hole where the seed is placed.] My neighbourhood has learned how to make the hole and add fertiliser. This way of cultivating sweet potatoes is new in this area" (Ibid: 9, 6). Thus, the combination of restored confidence, positive experiences of how he and his wife have managed to improve their living conditions, and a renewed curiosity to explore new possibilities motivates Francois to challenge himself and to aspire to the future. Like Josephine,

Francois has slowly enlarged his 'stock of experiences' which has enabled him and his wife to generate more ideas of how to improve their agriculture and their small business.

For some caregivers, their losses or bad experiences are just too overwhelming to allow them to forget or change their state of mind. This influences their ability to perceive the realistic goals as a helpful means of achieving what they might consider to be unrealistic or covert aspirations. Catharine has such covert dreams. She would like to be able to find a new place to live – a place far from her current neighbourhood and far from her sister with whom she has a bad relationship. Unfortunately, Catharine has neither the capability to realise this dream nor the ability to imagine how she will ever gain the capability to do so. The conflict between her and the sister influences her feelings of relatedness and her perception of being able to manage conflict as she feels excluded by her sister; "we have our elder sister who is staying near here. She hates us very much…I have already given up. It is really impossible. My sister is not even coming here. If she came here I could approach her and discuss the situation with her. But she refuses to come here" (Catharine: 7, 2). This influences her self-confidence and her perception of competence which in turn affects her ability to visualise a positive future.

Additionally, even though she seems to be able to set realistic goals, the agreements she has made with the FS employees and in the VSLA seem to be decisions of necessity rather than goals enabling her to aspire to something bigger: "I plan to buy either a piglet or a goat. And the remaining money will be used to sell products at the market…I will increase my small business…There is a space down there, where I will construct a house for [the piglet or the goat]…it can grow and get me fertiliser. And I can sell and get money" (Ibid: 8, 5). When it comes to her more covert aspirations, she does not have the confidence or the 'power within' to believe she will succeed and therefore she is not empowered to realise her dream of finding a new (and better) place to live. If Catharine does not experience any changes in the conflict with her sister or if her perception of relatedness is not completely satisfied by some other significant other, it may affect her negative perception of competence even further. Moreover, this may affect her perception of autonomy in the different decisions she makes and the agreements she makes with FS employees and the VSLA. As such, because of Catharine's conflict with her sister, she risks becoming completely demotivated and disempowered.

The above analyses indicate that the caregivers do have dreams and aspirations and these vary according to the caregivers' interests and preferences. However, their ability to materialise their

visions differs based on their perception of competence which is also linked to their capabilities – especially their psychological capabilities. Caregivers who perceive themselves as competent are more confident and believe they will succeed, just as caregivers who feel related to significant others believe they will receive the right support when needed. On the contrary, when the caregivers are regulated by external factors they have less confidence and even though they have dreams they do not expect the dreams to be realised. As such, the ability to aspire and to achieve goals depends on preferences, capabilities, and motivational regulations.

5.3.3. Summary

Most caregivers have become empowered to see the world differently and to set realistic goals in regard to their capabilities and in order to achieve their aims. They feel autonomous in their decisions and competent to realise their dreams. However, some caregivers do not perceive themselves entitled of realising their dreams, or they do not have the capabilities to make plans of how to achieve minimum results. This latter group seems to lack psychological empowerment enabling them to think positively about the future and to aspire for change.

5.4. Supportive environments for the children

According to Deci and Ryan (1985), an interest in gaining new knowledge and developing capabilities is part of a child's natural development; they are naturally interested in identifying new challenges and adventures. This interest may be facilitated by significant others whose supportive attitude may encourage them to investigate their own potential. These ideas are developed below.

5.4.1. Supportive environments and internalisation of preferences

When it comes to school attendance, the children are influenced by the FS employees' and caregivers' expectations and perceptions. Based on the group interviews with caregivers and informal conversations with FS employees, it seems the employees expect the children to attend school more and if possible to improve their performance at school. It seems that the FS employees perceive education as a means of development, and this could be one of the reasons that they expect

higher attendance. Many of the children have also noticed that they are given more time to work on their lessons: "Our parents have been trained in children's rights. Parents are now giving space for children to study and to review their lessons. Before they were not doing that" (Child gr.int. I: 4, 14). By giving the children time to study, the caregivers show that it is important for the children prioritise their education. This prioritisation and the external expectations to improve their attendance and results seem to be in accordance with the children's own interests, which could indicate that the children are either being supported in their preferences or that they have internalised the expectations and the perception of education as being important. Either way, the children can be regarded as internally regulated or intrinsically motivated to participate in school activities. This makes it more likely that the children will feel autonomous in their decision to attend school. However, the children do not explain why the change in their caregivers' behaviour is good, so their comments could be interpreted to mean that they appreciate no longer being obliged to help with tasks within the household, for example. If this is the case, the children's preferences should not only be regarded as being affected by the caregivers' and FS employees' perceptions but also by their own expectations (of not having to participate in the household). Performing tasks within the household may be seen as a kind of punishment while studying may be seen as a kind of reward, leading the children's behaviour to be regulated through introjection rather than internal regulation or intrinsic motivation.

The change in the caregivers' behaviour may also be expected to generate a change in the environment; a change that creates a supportive atmosphere giving the children the opportunity to exercise their newly gained abilities. "Most of the time, our parents use us for different tasks, but just after the training, our parents reduced different tasks and reserved time for reviewing lessons" (Child gr.int. I: 4, 17). In accordance with Deci and Ryan's (1985) conception of capability development, the children's revision of their lessons may serve as a context in which the children practice and investigate their own capabilities. This enables the children to master new skills and encourages them to continue the search for new challenges and capabilities which in turn facilitates feelings of competence and autonomy. When confronted with the potential pleasure of staying at home instead of going to school, one of the groups of children responded: "When we are ill, we can feel like that, [like staying at home]" (Child gr.int. II: 10, 27). This is another indication of the children's interest in attending school.

The children's preferences and their interest in education can be regarded as motivated by an inner excitement of mastering different challenges that is supported and advanced by the supportive environments created by caregivers and FS employees. However, it should be noted that some children may feel restricted rather than supported by the expectations and the change in the caregivers' behaviour. If the children fail to see any improvements in their school results or to find their lessons interesting, they may view education as an obligation rather than a right. In this case, the children will experience a change in context but may not perceive this change as the offering of alternatives from which they can choose. These children are at risk of developing extrinsic or introjected regulations because they are merely motivated to act according to external expectations and regulations rather than internal interests. This decreases the likelihood of them developing perceptions of autonomy and competence, or the feeling of having the freedom to choose.

5.4.2. Supportive environments, relatedness, and 'power with'

Apart from feeling competent and inspired to study, many of the children have noticed another change since attending school more regularly; they have started interacting with other children. One child explains it like this: "Things that made me change in my life: my parents put me in school and I met other children. When I met other children I changed; I love them, I cooperate with them" (Child gr. Int. II: 2, 4). Most of the other children agree: "We met the other children and we share everything" (Child gr. Int. II: 4, 21). That the children say that they share everything illustrates that they consider the other children to be trustworthy and that they have generated feelings of relatedness. The fact that the children believe they can share everything with their new friends may also indicate that they have created an environment based on mutual trust leading them to support one another. The children also express how they benefit from these new relationships: "You see it is important because when you are sick and stay at home your schoolmates come to see you and check how your health is. And when you don't feel better at school your schoolmate can take you to your family" (Child gr.int. II: 4, 7). This shows that the children have obtained access to groups of friends to whom they feel related, and it illustrates that the children find these encounters important. Based on the children's comments about meeting new people and establishing relationships, the children can be regarded as benefitting from these relationships that they perceive to be supportive. Even though the children do not describe their relationships with the other children as environments that lead them to generate solutions or collective development, it can be seen that the children create

supportive environments through which they generate 'power with' to support each other's wellbeing and thereby their development.

5.4.3. Relatedness, freedom to travel, and expanded 'stock of experiences'

The children do not only perceive the school environment as a place to establish supportive relationships. Some of them have noticed that they travel more than they did before. They seem to perceive this travel to be a way of meeting new people and creating relationships, and this enables them to generate new ideas and solve different challenges: "The more people you meet, the more people you know to help you, if you have any needs; for example, you can encounter a problem in the road, then the people you know can help you overcome that problem" (Child gr.int. II: 5, 7)[2]. Even though this quote describes a hypothetical situation, it indicates that the children perceive some of their relationships as supportive and that they have entered relationships based on the expectation that people help one another.

The children seem to be able to establish relationships through which they are able to create new ideas and new possibilities: "When you meet people you share different views and you can handle some issues" (Child gr.int. II:, 11, 20). In other words, the children have realised that when they work together they can solve complicated challenges and may achieve greater things than when working alone. It seems that the children expect greater results when they can draw on other people's 'stock of experience' rather than just their own. Thus, the children seem to have the ability to enter relationships with people who have the 'power to' support them or through which they may generate 'power with' in order to create new possibilities.

Not all the children have become able to generate feelings of support or feeling related to significant others. One of the girls interviewed explains that she would like to travel to the capital to visit her parents. Her parents work in the bigger city, so she is taken care of by her grandfather. Even though she is happy with him, she seems to miss the relationship with her parents. When asked about a significant change she has experienced, the girl describes the loss of her grandmother four months ago as the most significant: "My grandmother died and it made me very sad. I am not feeling well. I am unhappy" (Child gr.int. III: 1, 12). The fact that she sees the loss of her grandmother as

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[2] For the purpose of this analysis, this quote has been corrected from the following original text: "For the new people you discover, for example, if you have any needs you can go and ask them for support; you can encounter a problem in the road. Then the person you have known him and help you to overcome that problem"

significant illustrates how dependent the children are on the people they care about and how important it is that they have someone to whom they feel related. With her parents living hundreds of kilometres away, she is dependent on significant others and the supportive relationships she can establish with people situated near her grandfather.

If traveling is regarded as the ability to choose as conceptualised by Kabeer (1999), it may be concluded that those children who have gained the ability to travel have been empowered as they have access to places formerly denied to them; meanwhile, those children who have not gained this capacity are still disempowered. However, in reality, it is difficult to say whether this access to new places is a result of an empowerment process or of the children getting older and more experienced leading to more responsibility and greater freedom. In the case of the girl who would like to see her parents, it may be concluded that she does not have the capability to travel (as she and her grandfather do not have the financial means to pay for the ticket). Other children, meanwhile, may be considered too young or irresponsible by their caregivers or other duty bearers; this may be regarded as a restriction of the children's free will but not as disempowerment.

5.4.4. Summary

Obtaining access to new environments seems to influence the children to internalise the values and ideas held by the people with whom they interact in these environments, such as FS employees, teachers, and peers. It also seems to foster an interest in establishing new relations through which they can support one another. Furthermore, the children's perceptions of their relationships seem to be based on an understanding of the 'power with' generated through interactions in different settings enabling them to create new ideas and possibilities. Children with limited capabilities, however, fail to experience the positive consequences of traveling. They have the ability to dream about traveling but not the means to realise the dream, which leaves them disempowered.

5.5. The children's Capabilities

One of the biggest changes noted by the children is their access to school materials and thereby to education. Before entering the FSP, many of the children attended school only occasionally, but since receiving notebooks, uniforms, and school bags the children have become able to participate

in school activities on a regular basis: "I used to drop out due to a lack of materials, but due to the intervention of the FSP I no longer lack school materials and I attend school regularly" (Child gr.int. I, 3: 5). Obtaining access to school materials provides the children with an alternative to their former situation; they can choose to attend Rwanda's nine years of basic education. The children seem to appreciate the change: "We are now intelligent. We are not as we were. Nowadays we know how to write and read. It trained us" (Child gr.int. II: 10, 21). This indicates that the children have developed their academic skills, but it also shows that they feel more competent and they perceive themselves as trained which improves their psychological capabilities.

The children perceive themselves as capable of making a change. In short, they have come to see education as a means to development: "[When attending school] you change and you become intelligent. You become knowledgeable. When you follow the teacher's explanation, for example in English, you can go beyond and become a very developed person" (Child gr.int. II: 10, 7). The perception of education as a means to development can be regarded as extrinsic motivation as education is the instrument to reach something appreciable which again indicates that the children are being regulated by either identification or integration. This is further supported by the following quote: "For example, I will study science and technology, you can discover how your body is functioning and you discover several secrets…how the brain is functioning, how your head is functioning, how bones are formed, and how to conduct yourself in case you are hurt" (Child gr. int. II: 10, 12). Even though Ryan and Deci (2000a) refer to education as an instrument and therefore perceive students as being extrinsically motivated, the quote may also be an example of a child's inner curiosity and excitement about a certain topic. If this is the case, the child is intrinsically motivated and self-determined in the sense that he finds satisfaction in experimenting and mastering the exercises. Another child comments that: "When you attend school, especially when you study history, you know history, the past of human beings, and you know human stories" (Child gr.int. II: 10, 9). Here, the child could be replicating their history teacher's explanation of the reason to study history, or they could be expressing their own inner interest in a specific topic. Whether internally regulated or intrinsically motivated, the children seem to be interested in expanding their capabilities and gaining new knowledge.

5.5.1. Summary

The children's newly gained access to school activities seems to foster an intrinsic interest in new activities and gaining new knowledge. Besides an intrinsic interest, the children also perceive education as a means of further development, and it seems they have internalised this idea leading to either identified or integrated regulation. This allows the children to expand their capabilities and their perception of competence as they master the topics presented by the teachers at school.

5.6. The children's Aspirations and ability to see the world differently

As part of their natural development, children go through trial and error and challenge themselves with different activities. By doing this, they gradually learn to turn their ideas and dreams into reality. The children participating in this study observe their parents, teachers, and FS employees and volunteers and evaluate and experiment with ideas about behaviour, customs, and values in order to discover how to realise their dreams. As argued by Appadurai (2004), it is easier for those with large sets of experiences and the capacity to experiment to realise their aspirations. In the following section, the children's aspirations will be analysed in order to understand the inspiration behind the children's goals and future plans.

5.6.1. Aspiration and economic means

By observing their caregivers, the children seem to perceive savings groups as a means of realising their goals and achieving development. Witnessing the caregivers meeting with other caregivers on a weekly basis and organising their income (to contribute to the weekly savings and to pay back obtained loans) changes the children's perception of how to manage an income and organise a household: "Our parents used to use the money for activities that would never make any interest, but afterwards, when being trained in how to save for the future they have started profitable activities" (Child gr.int. I: 4, 23). Another explains: "You can meet people in savings groups and if your project has failed you can talk to them and say: 'please, the project I was running has failed; what can I do?' And they can suggest what can be done to overcome the problem" (Child gr.int. II: 11, 21). This change in perception influences the children and their aspirations and interests; the children are inspired and interested in starting savings groups for children. "They can save; children

can save – it is possible" (Child gr.int. II: 12, 14). Some of the children are already members of savings groups facilitated by other NGOs or by the local community leader; others have invested their sporadic income in livestock. These children have realised that saving money or investing their income increases their ability to achieve their aspirations. In the interviews, some of the children mentioned that they plan how to maintain their investments and multiply their stock. Others mentioned that they use their own income or investments to buy small goods that they would not like to ask their caregivers to get for them and would not like to ask for permission to buy. Thus, whether the children should be regarded as empowered (i.e. able to envisage a future requiring savings or investment) varies on a case-by-case basis.

Not all the children are saving. These children are not involved in savings groups and they do not seem to have any specific plans about how or when to do so. They either do not perceive themselves capable of saving or they do not see the purpose of doing so. Therefore, they cannot be regarded as empowered to see the world differently and change their circumstances in order to realise their vision. Despite this, it can be assumed that the children's positive attitudes towards their caregivers' savings groups may serve their own development later on. Using Ryan and Deci's (2000a) conceptualisation of internalisation, the children seem to have identified with the values of the VSLA which may lead them to save or initiate savings groups when they establish their own families.

5.6.2. The ability to see another future for the country

When it comes to ideas and plans for the future of the country, it seems that the children have been taught that it is important to develop the country and that they have internalised and identified with this perception. In the first group interview, some of the children explained: "when you study you develop the country…in the future you may become a teacher and when you are teaching you help the country to decrease the number of illiterates" (Child gr. int. I: 3, 24). The children perceive their own education as a means of educating or facilitating others to become educated. However, this perception seems to be produced by the values introduced by their teachers or the FS employees rather than being based on the children's own experiences or observations. Even though the children believe that becoming a teacher will help the country to fight illiteracy, they don't seem to understand what it takes to become a teacher. The children's dreams are still under construction, as

they do not talk about how they will achieve the development they talk about. As such, their comments about developing the country and decreasing illiteracy are more like a dream than a goal.

By identifying with the value of developing the country, the children are regulated by this perception and thereby motivated by the idea that they can help to make a change. The children's preferences are influenced by norms that are reflected in society, teachers' and FS employees' behaviour and comments by community leaders and other significant people in the local community. In general, the children appear interested in protecting their country and the environment. When it comes to how to do so, one child articulates it like this: "For example, if someone burns the forest you have to go to local authorities because he is not protecting environment; he is destroying it. Maybe they can take that bad man and put him into prison" (child gr.int. II: 17, 23). This is a sign of a behavioural regulation through internalisation of others' explanations and others' expectations. As long as the children act according to norms and expectations, they should be regarded as extrinsically motivated, but as they gradually internalise the norms and values underlying the idea of developing the country they become internally regulated or even intrinsically motivated to support their community and the country. In short, it can be concluded that the children have aspirations about the future of their country, and they have internalised ideas of how they as children can support this process.

5.6.3. Summary

The children develop aspirations as a result of their interactions with others including their caregivers, teachers, and peers. The children are presented with values and norms which they interpret, and in most cases internalise and either identify with or integrate. Thus, the children's aspirations for their own and the country's future are influenced by the values and norms embedded in the FSP, school regulations, and local and national regulations. Whether the children are able to envisage the factors that enhance or hinder them in achieving these ideas depends on the concreteness of the idea or the activity. For example, when it comes to the purpose of education, the children have ideas of how education leads to specific skills, whereas ideas about how start a new savings group seem to demand experiences that the children have not yet obtained.

5.7. Sub-conclusion

Generally, the caregivers participating in the FSP have benefitted from the Programme; however, the degree to which they have benefited varies according to their human, social and psychological capabilities as well as their financial capacity. Those who have started or improved the methods used in their business or agriculture, and who are making desirable decisions are also the ones with positive and realistic aspirations. They may be regarded as empowered. Those who are not capable of making decisions concerning the achievement of their aspirations are more vulnerable to sudden changes and have less positive attitudes towards the future. They may be regarded as undergoing an empowerment process in which they may find themselves empowered one day, but find themselves disempowered the next day. Furthermore, the children may be regarded as empowered through the changes in their caregivers' behaviour and livelihood. Not only have they obtained access to facilities such as education (which was formerly denied to them), but they have started developing aspirations that will allow them to make plans and generate ideas about how to challenge themselves and how to support the development of their own family and the community in general. The children are positive about the changes that have led to improvements in their lives. In short, they are in a positive process of social, economic, and psychological empowerment.

Importantly, many caregivers and children perceive the FSP as a means to become more knowledgeable. The change they experience results in an energy making them work hard in order to succeed with their school or business activities, which in turn make them more experienced. They also perceive the FSP as a means to de-isolation, i.e. they meet other caregivers, FS employees, children and schoolmates. Those who have identified significant others to whom they feel related and by whom they are supported can be regarded as undergoing a psychological empowerment process in which they internalise values and ideas presented by others, and they develop 'power within', 'power with' and (in some cases) 'power to' gradually work towards a more valuable future. They are self-determined in seeking new adventures and mastering new capabilities, and they aspire for their own as well as others' development. Meanwhile, some caregivers do not feel supported by significant others. They have low levels of psychological empowerment; they do not perceive themselves as competent, their self-esteem is low, and they find it difficult to believe in a different future. Even though these caregivers may have experienced some changes, they do not have the capability to bring together their experiences in order to develop ideas or solutions to their current situation.

6. Discussion

This chapter presents the findings of the study and discusses the analytical framework and methodology

6.1. Presentation of findings

Through their enrolment in the FSP, caregivers and children have been exposed to various interventions and initiatives taken by the employees and volunteers associated with the Programme. Most of these interventions have been received positively, and although the caregivers or children may not have seen direct results of the initiatives, they perceive the potential changes as important for their situation and future development.

Some of the changes the caregivers have experienced are a result of becoming less isolated. They have joined groups that also include other caregivers. Through these groups, they have transformed their social interactions into supportive relations that foster the 'power with' to support one another and to collectively generate opportunities and solutions to issues faced by most of the caregivers in the group. Those caregivers who perceive these relationships as supportive and who have appointed other caregivers as 'significant others' also generate 'power within' and perceptions of competence. These caregivers are capable of transferring the power and the capabilities they have developed within one group to other groups and other settings, which leads to empowerment in various settings. On the other hand, those caregivers who regard these social interactions as mere interactions (i.e. not as supportive relations) fail to obtain the same benefit from the collective 'power with' and fail to generate an individual 'power within'. These caregivers are less likely to transfer experiences from one setting to another and they are less likely to perceive themselves as capable of accomplishing the activities they have started.

Most of the caregivers have moved from temporary jobs to other income generating activities, and they have improved their agricultural activities leading to greater profit and more stable and secure incomes. For many caregivers this has resulted in improved financial means and economic capabilities. Further, participatory training on income generating activities, budgeting, and management have improved the caregivers' social capabilities (e.g. managerial skills) leading to better results in their micro businesses and agricultural activities. With these improved capabilities,

many caregivers have experienced success which has in turn generated positive feelings and 'power within' to proceed with their activities with a positive attitude and a belief that things will be alright. Other caregivers, however, have not managed to make the purposeful changes that would have resulted in positive self-perception and positive loops of success. In contrast to the former caregivers, these latter caregivers have not been psychologically empowered.

Just like the caregivers, the children have managed to establish supportive relationships within which they either receive support from friends who are more powerful than themselves or generate 'power with' their friends. The children become able to think about other situations in which they could use their 'power with' others to generate ideas and solutions to various challenges. This indicates that the children are now able to think creatively and that they are able to transfer their experiences from one setting to another. Finally, the children perceive themselves as competent of accomplishing their aspirations and they feel autonomous to do so.

Furthermore, by attending school activities, the children have expanded their capabilities, which they find relevant to their further development. Their preferences have been influenced by this change and by the people they meet through school activities and the FSP. Most of the children feel competent and interested in identifying new adventures and opportunities to further expand their capabilities.

Finally, some of the caregivers have started making short term plans while others have even set long term goals. Some of those who have set long term goals are now able to aspire to a different future and they have obtained the financial means and the ability to combine different capabilities to make realistic plans. Others lack the capabilities to realise their aspirations so the goals they have set simply turn into dreams. This may lead to negative feelings of despair and a lack of perception of autonomy and competence, which in turn diminishes their psychological empowerment. It may also lead the caregivers to examine the factors that are preventing them from realising their dreams, which in turn may lead them to minimising their dreams and adjusting their goals to fit their existing capabilities.

The children are also able to imagine the world differently and have various ideas about how to improve their future. There is great variation in how concrete these ideas are and how easily they may be turned into reality. The children who are already saving or investing their money have more realistic plans. These children are internally motivated to make changes. Finally, the children's

preferences and values regarding education and the future of Rwanda has been influenced by their increased capabilities and the influence of significant others.

In short, as a result of the FSP enrolment, most of the caregivers and children are undergoing an empowerment process in which they find support from significant (in terms of 'power to' and 'power with'), they improve their capabilities in order to make desirable choices, and they visualise their aspirations. Those who are not undergoing an empowerment process remain disempowered, and some have even become disillusioned as their negative experiences weight in favour of their positive experiences.

6.2. Discussion of analytical framework

The analytical framework used in this study was produced by integrating the theories of Empowerment and Self-Determination from Development Studies and Psychology, respectively. The concepts of Power, Choice, Aspiration, and Capabilities (that make up Empowerment) are brought together with the concepts of Supportive Environments, Perceptions of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, and Internalised preferences (as conceptualised in the Self-Determination Theory). These concepts form the analytical framework which, for simplicity, is divided into three constructs: Supportive environments, Capabilities, and Aspirations.

The findings of the analysis show that these constructs are interrelated and that their constituent concepts support one another. In fact, the large number of relevant concepts may make it difficult to obtain detailed and in-depth findings about the caregivers' and children's perceptions of the changes they have experienced while enrolled in the FSP. On the other hand, the many concepts allow for a holistic perspective of the caregivers' and children's experiences and the changes they have seen. In short, these many concepts allow a complete understanding of the ways in which the FSP affects the empowerment of the caregivers and children. To ensure clarity, the framework shall be discussed below in terms of the three constructs.

6.2.1. Supportive environments

Supportive environments are based on elements from both the Empowerment and Self-Determination theories since 'power to' and 'power with' form the environments that offer caregivers and children the support to generate 'power within', to develop norms and values relevant to their individual and collective development, and to generate 'power to' support others.

As the natural curiosity in seeking new challenges and the interest of mastering different activities is encouraged by significant others and supportive environments (Deci & Ryan, 1985), the caregivers' and children's internalisation of values and ideas and their improvement of capabilities (including the ability to aspire) signifies the interrelatedness between this construct and the constructs of Capabilities and Aspirations. Further, it demonstrates the relevance of supportive relations to the caregivers' and children's empowerment.

In short, it may be recommended, that employees and volunteers of the FSP should support the families in turning their relations into supportive relationships or supportive environments. However, supportive relationships are difficult to measure in the field. In this study, the findings are developed through thorough analysis which is not always possible for the FS employees and volunteers working with empowerment. When working with the families it may be difficult to determine which relations are supportive, i.e. which are based on mutual trust and the appointment of significant others; which are non-supportive; and which are neutral social interactions. Thus, it may be difficult for the FS employees to support the families in identifying and choosing supportive relationships and environments, just as it may be difficult to figure out whether social or non-supportive relations may be turned into supportive relations. Finally, it is difficult to support the families in deciding why some environments are non-supportive.

6.2.2. Capabilities

The second construct of the analytical framework is Capabilities, and is made up of the different capabilities conceptualised by Narayan (2005) and Kabeer (1999), and as presented by Deci and Ryan (1985). The construct also includes the perception of competence and the ability to make choices according to individual and collective preferences. It is a useful tool for exploring the ways in which changes in capabilities influence the choices made by the caregivers and the children and

their perception of competence, and how these have influenced their preferences. This construct is closely related to the caregivers' and children's experiences. Many of those with positive experiences about the decisions they have made have also improved their self-perception, their perception of competence, and autonomy. This has changed their perception of competence and it has inspired them to continue aspiring for development.

Interestingly, a small number of the caregivers have managed to make changes without changing their perception of their competence and without improving their self-perception. To understand why these caregivers do not react like other (and more successful) caregivers, it was necessary to draw on the Supportive Environment construct. This construct made it possible to explore how appointed significant others influence the caregivers' perception of competence, their perception of relatedness and their perception of being entitled to their envisaged changes. Importantly, though, the analytical framework does not take into account psychological conditions (e.g. severe depression, mourning, or other sorrow). Some of the caregivers and children have lived in poor conditions for a long time, and many of the caregivers have experienced the loss of dear friends and family, and may have been traumatised by the genocide, chronic illness in the family or other challenging events. Such conditions influence people's well-being and psychological conditions which in turn influences their decision-making power, their ability to perceive themselves as competent and possibly also their ability to feel related to others. Thus, to understand the caregivers' and the children's (lack of) choices, it is also important to understand and to help them overcome challenges within their psychological condition. Even though the analytical framework does not include these conditions directly, the construct of Supportive Environments made it possible to elucidate supportive and non-supportive relationships, which may compensate for failing to include the caregivers' and children's psychological state.

6.2.3. Aspirations

The final construct of the analytical framework, Aspirations, combines aspirations as presented in an empowerment context and as conceptualised in a psychological context. Aspirations refer to the fact that caregivers and children can envisage an alternative to their current situation, are capable of achieving this alternative, and can see that they are entitled to it. Whether the caregivers and children are able to visualise their opportunity and to envisage the rout to success or not influences

their psychological empowerment and self-determination. Those experiencing success with their short term plans are also the ones setting new goals and aiming for greater prospects. On the contrary, the ones experiencing failure are in risk of becoming completely disillusioned, amotivated, and disempowered. However, when they are guided to turn their goals into short term plans gradually leading to the accomplishment of the goals, especially the caregivers prove to improve their ability to do the same with other goals and dreams.

If one considers only the overt preferences when discussing the applicability of Aspirations, this construct is one of the easiest parts of the framework to apply within development projects and the FSP specifically. It may be easy for people with 'power to' support others to guide vulnerable families to determine the capabilities needed to accomplish a determined goal. Yet, when it comes to covert preferences, the situation is much more complicated. As indicated in the literature review, covert dreams remain covert as they are not considered suitable within the social norms or cultural customs. Thus covert preferences may be much more difficult to achieve than overt preferences. The families may not be able to express their dreams (it may even be difficult to express overt preferences), and it is challenging for the FS employees to help the families to identify the constraints, power relations, lack of capabilities or other factors that are hindering the families from realising their covert dreams. As Aspirations draw on the constructs of Capability and Supportive Environments, employees and other people who play a supportive role for the families may use these elements to support the families in articulating their covert visions. Furthermore, if the families are supported to plan in order to reach their overt goals, they may also be able to make plans for their covert dreams.

Although the analytical framework deals with Aspirations and the caregivers' and children's ability to envisage the factors that support or hinder the realisation of their dreams, the findings of this study may accentuate changes that are due to overt preferences rather than to covert. This indicates that if the caregivers and children are to talk about their covert aspirations they need to establish a trustworthy relationship with the people supporting them, and with the researcher studying their empowerment.

6.2.4. Implications of the analytical framework

One aspect that this study has failed to examine in-depth is the general situation facing the families, employees and other Rwandans. As the FSP is situated in Gasaka, Rwanda, this context influences individual and collective behaviour. Rwanda is not only a developing country; it is a country recovering from a war that affected its population in numerous ways. Although the analytical framework comprises Supportive Environments (that consist of 'power to', 'power with' and supportive relationships), these have not been sufficiently developed in order to explore the consequences of the country's socio-political situation. This does not render the findings untrustworthy, but does suggest that they do not explore the contextual situation sufficiently. They do not elucidate the ways in which empowered people may be influenced by their own settings and supportive environments in order to generate 'power to' support others or 'power with' others. Thus, in a future study, it would be pertinent to include data demonstrating how families and communities cope with the socio-political situation in the country.

6.3. Discussion of methodology

As mentioned in Chapter 3, the empirical data used in this study were originally gathered for an internal report written in collaboration with SOS. The length of the fieldwork and the methods used for data collection were developed primarily for the purpose of the internal report and depended on agreements with SOS. This had some implications for the analysis of the empirical data and the usage of the analytical framework.

The short period of time allowed for data collection restricted the research methods to group and individual interviews and an observation of a VSLA meeting. More time in the field would have allowed the inclusion of other qualitative or mixed methods such as participant observations, repeated interviews with the same informants, or surveys. Such methods may have improved the empirical data and revealed more in-depth information about the informants' activities and experiences. Nevertheless, the empirical data have allowed for triangulation between the background information obtained through group interviews, the caregivers' and children's explanations about their own experiences, and the analytical framework which gives a fair and credible presentation of the findings. This is in line with Bryman (2001) who points to triangulation as a method of validating the analysis of empirical data.

One aspect making qualitative research challenging is stressed by Kvale (2007). He stresses the importance of establishing a good relationship between the interviewer and the informants. It is possible that if I (as the researcher) failed to establish a relationship of trust with the interviewees, they may not have opened up and talked about sensitive topics such as covert preferences, psychological issues (e.g. traumas from the Rwandan genocide), and socio-political conditions. Establishing a relationship of trust between the interviewer and informants takes time. The inclusion of other qualitative research methods such as participant observations, focus groups, or repeated in-depth interviews with a few selected families could be used to improve confidentiality and create a stronger relationship between the informants and me (as the interviewer).

Finally, had it been possible to conduct the interviews in a language understood by both the interviewer and the informants, some misunderstanding could have been eliminated, which may have enabled a better relation between the two parties. This was particularly true of the interviews with the children; speaking a common language would have improved the relationship and eased the conversations with the children.

According to Bryman (2001) qualitative studies can be assessed according to the primary criteria of trustworthiness and authenticity. These criteria may be juxtaposed with the criteria of reliability and validity used in quantitative studies. Trustworthiness is made up of four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The criteria of authenticity are: fairness, ontological authenticity, educative authenticity, catalytic authenticity, and tactical authenticity.

Despite the abovementioned issues with the methodology, the empirical findings are considered trustworthy and authentic. Firstly, because the different kinds of interviews with various informants enhance credibility since they allowed for triangulation between the empirical data, analytical framework, and empirical findings, and fairness as they represent different viewpoints among employees, caregivers and children. Secondly, the transcribed interviews enhance dependability and confirmability since they have been used with care and respect for the interviewee's statements. Thirdly, the encodings serve to show how caregivers and children have experienced their first year of enrolment in the FSP and through which processes they are being empowered.

7. Conclusion

This study asked the question: How does the Family Strengthening Programme in Gasaka, Rwanda affect the caregivers' and children's empowerment. To answer this research question, focus was on the psychological dimension of empowerment and on self-determination. These two theories were brought together in an analytical framework consisting of the following three constructs: Supportive Environments, Capabilities, and Aspirations. Supportive Environments comprises the concepts of Supportive Environment, Power, Perceptions of Relatedness and Competence. Capabilities comprises the concepts of Choice, Capabilities, and Perceptions of Competence. Aspirations comprises concepts of Intrinsic motivation, Aspiration, Capabilities, and 'Power within'. This framework fills a gap in the existing literature on empowerment by exploring the psychological dimension thus adding to the academic debate and application in practice.

The pragmatic approach applied in this study resulted in an abductive method of 'going back and forth' between the different types of empirical data and applied theories. Based on case study research, empirical data was obtained through group interviews and individual interviews with selected employees, volunteers, CBO members, caregivers and children. These form the basis for the analysis of processes facilitated by the FSP affecting caregivers' and children's empowerment.

Drawing on empirical data, five interventions – Participatory Trainings, Family Development Plans, VSLAs, Income Generating Activities, and children's school participation – were identified as the major activities within the FSP. These form the settings through which caregivers' and children's perceived changes were analysed.

The three constructs of the analytical framework were employed forming the structure of the analysis. It is concluded that caregivers and children are affected positively by the supportive environments established and facilitated by the FSP. These increase their perception of relatedness, 'power with' and 'power to' support one another, which in turn enhances their 'power within' and improve their self-perception. This results in both caregivers and children seeking new challenges improving their capabilities and their perception of competence. Those who are able to create supportive environments in other contexts than the FSP are concluded to have generated even more 'power to' and 'power with' than those finding themselves in environments based on mere friendly relationships or even negative relationships. Furthermore, negative environments are concluded to affect caregivers' negative self-perception and influence their 'power within' negatively.

The caregivers' and children's increased capabilities also improve their ability to make decisions according to their own interest. This improves their feeling of autonomy and competence. However, many caregivers and children are still vulnerable to sudden changes e.g. price increases or the loss of relatives. Depending on their ability to manage challenges, i.e. whether challenges are perceived optimal or too challenging, they either manage to overcome the challenge improving their feeling of competence, or they succumb, which enhances their negative perception of competence. Thus, caregivers and children who master challenges improve their psychological empowerment while the contrary reverses the empowerment process and can lead to psychological disempowerment.

It is concluded that caregivers and children are supported by FS staff to make plans, set goals and aspire to the future, i.e. caregivers make plans of how to change the family's prospects, whereas children are interested in their own development as well as the development of the country. It is concluded that there is a great interrelation between the caregivers' and children's ability to aspire, and their existing capabilities as well as the environments in which they (do not) find support. Those who already master different activities, e.g. saving money, are more likely to aspire to a positive future than those who face many challenges. Similarly, those who benefit from supportive environments are more likely to believe in a positive and achievable future.

The overall conclusion is that the FSP affects caregivers' and children's psychological empowerment by improving their ability to establish supportive environments through which they increase their ability to make purposeful decisions, and aspire to the future. Perception of autonomy, competence, relatedness, 'power to', 'power with', 'power within', choice, and the ability to aspire are all elements fostering the caregivers' and children's self-perception, their confidence, and their ability to perceive themselves capable and entitled of making a change.

8. Future implications

This study has examined the ways in which the Family Strengthening Programme (FSP) in Gasaka, Rwanda affects the empowerment processes of caregivers and children enrolled in the Programme. The FSP in Gasaka was developed for that specific region and in order to meet the criteria of a specific Danish foundation fund (DANIDA). However, it is also founded on the general concepts developed by SOS International so it shares commonalities with the FSPs run by the various SOS sister organisations.

Drawing on a single case study (Yin, 2009), this study analyses one FSP within one context. Thus, it would be interesting to undertake a multiple case study involving more FSPs. One way of conducting such a case study would be to examine two FSPs implemented in the same region that involve different interventions. In Ethiopia, for example, communities use Savings and Credit Cooperative Unions (Saccos) as a place to meet, share experiences, and get support for handling various issues. It is also a place where people work together and where they may save a small amount of money on a weekly or monthly basis (Coop, 2015). Even though Saccos consist of 100 to 200 members, they share similarities with Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs). Comparing one programme that included Saccos with another that included VSLA would allow for a deeper understanding of the elements included in the two types of groups. For example, is it access to savings and loans or the opportunity to share ideas that empowers people? It would also allow consideration of which of the economic, social, political and psychological dimensions of empowerment families and communities believe are important for the development of their families and communities.

Another case study approach would be to examine FSPs consisting of exactly the same intervention(s) in two different regions or countries. Such a study could, for example, compare an urban area with a rural area, e.g. Kigali (the capital of Rwanda) and Gikongoro (a rural area in Rwanda and one of the poorest sectors of the country). This would enhance understanding of how specific elements affect families, communities, and local authorities within different contexts.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview guides

This appendix consists of interview guides for group interviews as well as individual interviews.

Group interview with Caregivers

Two groups of six to eight caregivers (16 caregivers in total)

Duration: Approximately three hours (maybe only two)

- Introduction
    - o Who I am
    - o The purpose of the interview
    - o Confidentiality
- Most significant change
    - o Please think of something significant that has made a change in your life
    - o Why is this situation/thing/episode important?
- The work of SOS
    - o How does SOS contact new participants?
    - o What kind of help does SOS provide participating families?
    - o What kind of training did you receive?
    - o Where and when do you meet with SOS Staff? And with what purpose?
    - o Where and when do you meet with other org, e.g. CBO, NGO, Government bodies?
- IGA
    - o What kind of activities gives you an income?
    - o Have you changed either your activities or the amount of work?
        - ▪ Is that good, bad, …?
    - o Have your income changed recently?
    - o Have you changed the way you spend your money?
        - ▪ What difference does it make?
        - ▪ Why is this important to you?
    - o Who do you discuss such (potential) changes with? And where?
    - o Who would you like to, if possible, discuss such matters with?
    - o About the IGA
        - ▪ Who are the customers?

- ▪ What do they buy?

  ▪ Where do they come from?

  ▪ Is it easy to get (more) customers?

- VSLA

  o How often do you meet?

  o Why do you meet?

  o What do you discuss at meetings?

  o What contribution does it give you?

  o Have your income changed recently?

  o Have you changed the way you spend your money?

  ▪ What difference does it make?

  ▪ Why is this important to you?

  o How do you manage to save money?

  o Would it have been possible before you joined SOS?

  o What plans do you have with your savings?

  o Is it easy to borrow money?

  o What do you use the money for?

- Empowerment

  o Have your capacity to buy goods changed?

  o Are you more or less involved in decision making compared to before this Programme? And why is that?

  o What are the most common decisions you take during a day? Who else are involved in these decisions? Did you take such decisions before the engagement with SOS?

  o How does this help you in your daily life?

- Family management/gestion de la famille

  o How did you manage the family before SOS?

  o How do you manage it now?

  o Have your decisions concerning your children changed?

  o Have your relationship with your children changed?

- Relationship

  o How is the relationship between SOS participants?

  o How is the relationship with neighbours?

- o How was it before with these parties?
- o How do neighbours think of SOS?
- Society
  - o What changes have you seen in the society?
  - o How will it last – be sustainable?
  - o Who/what bodies have made the change possible?
  - o Have your involvement in the society changed over the last years?
- Child rights
  - o Why is it important/necessary to learn about child rights?
  - o How will/can/may it change your life/livelihood?
  - o How may it change the life of your children?
- Good parent and good childhood?

Individual interview with caregivers

- SOS engagement
    - o How long have you been with SOS?
    - o Still receive help from SOS (or graduated)?
    - o How many children are registered with SOS?
    - o How did you get in contact with SOS?
    - o What agreement did you make/what expectations between you and SOS?
- Work and other income generating activities
    - o Change in activities?
    - o Change in income?
    - o Change in the way income is used?
    - o Change in amount of time spent on these activities (hours out of house/hours away from children/hours of work)?
- Most significant change
    - o Please tell me something significant that has made a change in your life
    - o Why is this situation/thing/episode important?
- Training
    - o What training provided by SOS has been the most important?
    - o Which of them have been the most difficult to implement?

Group interview with children

One groups of six children aged 13 – 17 (6 children)

One groups of six children aged 13 – 15 (6 children)

One groups of six children aged 10 – 12 (6 children)

- Introduction
    - o Who I am
    - o The purpose of this workshop is to talk about change
- I will ask you to think about something significant that has change something in your life. *J'aimerai vous demander de pencer à quelque chose significante qui a canger votre vie.*
    - o Please use ten minutes to think through your story. If you can, please write or draw (the highlights of) the story. *SVP utiliser les prochaine 10 minuttes de creer a votre histoire. Si vous etez capable d'y faire SVP ecrivez ou designez votre histoire sur une feuille. Vous pouvez commencer.*
    - o Why did you choose these activities/situations? Why are they important and significant? *Pourquoi avez vous choirsi ces activités/situation?Pourquoi est-ce qu'il sont important et significant?*
    - o How was it before? And what kind of change have you experienced? What impact has it made? *Comment est-ce que c'etai avant? Et quel change avez-vous experiencé? Quel sorte d'impact as t-il donné?*
- Discussion of the stories, the high lights from every story. Similarities and differences are discussed – Why do you think these similarities and differences occurred?
    - o *Pensez-vous que c'est la même chose pour tous les autres enfants été aider par SOS?*
    - o *Que ditez vos parents? La même chose que vous?*

Sensemaking, decision making and empowerment
    - o What kind of decisions do you think it is important to involve children in?
    - o What kind of decisions are only for adults to make?
    - o Why is it important that parents involve children in decision making?
    - o Do you think a programme like this one makes parents involve their children (more often) in decision making?

Child rights:
- Who should know about child rights?
- Do you think parents sometimes forget about child rights?

FSP related questions:

- If you should facilitate a programme like the one your family is joining what should definitely be part/subject of the programme?
- What changes to the programme would you make?
- Would you involve the children (more/less) in the programme?
- What contribution do children give such a programme?

- When I one day get children, what should I do to become a good mother?
- If I want to give my future children a good life, what would that be like? (What should I do to give them a good life?)
- *Est-ce que vos parents sont proche d'être des bonnes mères et pères/gandmère et grandpère?*
- *Trouvez-vous que vos parent ont changé depuis les derniers années? Comment?*

VSLA

- What do you think of the VSLA your parents are joinging?
- What positive changes do you see due to the VSLA?
- What negative changes?
- Do you save money yourselves? (Would you like to?)
- Would you like to be part of a savings group?

Child rights:

- Who should know about child rights?
- Do you think parents sometimes forget about child rights?
- What do you know about child rights?
- Why is it important to teach children about child rights?
- What have changed after your parents learned about child rights?
- How do your parents encourage you? And what do they encourage you to do?

Appendix 2: Overview of interview participants

In this appendix the Tables 3.1 Caregiver who participated in individual interviews and table 3.2 Children who participated in group interviews are presented. Subsequently, an overview of the caregivers participating in individual interviews is provided including their IGAs before and after entering the FSP.

Caregivers who participated in individual interviews				
Name	**Age**	**No. of children**	**Marital status**	**Other information**
Claudette	57	5, of which 3 are orphaned	Widowed	
Frida	41	2	Widowed	Chronically ill
Babette	40	2	Never been married	Chronically ill
Claudine	38	4	Divorced	One of the leaders of her VSLA
Francois	57	4	Married	President of his VSLA & a CBO member
Maria	47	3	Widowed	
Josephine	57	2	Widowed	Lives with two of her four children and two grandchildren
Therese	53	2	Widowed	
Cathrine	32	2	Divorced	
Marianne	45	6	Widowed	Chronically ill
Merenda	53	4	Husband imprisoned	

Tabel 3.2 Caregivers who participated in individual interviews

Children who participated in group interviews								
Group 13 - 17			**Group 13 - 15**			**Group 10 - 12**		
Gender	**Age**	**Primary caregiver**	**Gender**	**Age**	**Primary caregiver**	**Gender**	**Age**	**Primary caregiver**
Girl	15	Parents	Boy	14	Parents	Girl	12	Mother
Boy	15	Parents	Girl	15	Mother	Girl	10	Mother
Boy	17	Grandfather	Boy	15		Girl	10	Father
Girl	14	Grandmother	Girl	14	Parents	Girl	12	Grandfather
Boy	13	Mother	Girl	14	Parents			
Girl	17	Mother	Boy	13	Parents			
Girl	15	Mother						
Girl	14	Mother						

Tabel 3.3 Children who participated in group interviews

Data analysis: Condensed information about the caregivers situation before and after the enrolment in the Family Strengthening Programme							
Name	**Marital status**	**No. of children**	**IGA before FSP**	**IGA after FSP**	**Construction work at home**	**Usage of loans**	**Perception of savings**
Claudette	Husband died due to illness	5 hereof two orphans		Sell banana and tomatoes at the market	Plans to implement a new entrance to the house		Find savings important but difficult
Frida	Husband died due to illness	2			Improve the walls of her house; implement agreements from the FDP		Find savings important but difficult
Babette	Single	2	Temporary work	Sell goods in a shop	Constructs an adjacent house next to her former house	Uses loans to construct a house	
Claudine	Divorced		Temporary construction work; sell own production of sogum beer at the market	Sell sogum beer at the market; sell goods from her house	Is constructing a house for herself and her children		Find savings important and now find the means more easily
Francois	Married for the second time	4	Cultivated own land	Cultivate own land; sell crops at the market			Find savings important and now find the means more easily
Maria	Husband died during genocide		Temporary work; savings group in local community	Banana beer production; cultivate own land,		Has obtained loans to start the banana beer	Find savings important and now find the

				and sell products at the market		production	means more easily
Josephine	Husband died during genocide	4 at home including two grandchildren		Cultivate own land and sell crops at the market	Improvements in the house		Find savings important and now find the means more easily
Therese	Husband died during genocide				Improvements in the house		Find savings important and now find the means more easily
Cathrine	Divorced	2	Temporary work for neighbours	Temporary work; cultivate own land and sell vegetables at the market	Has implemented agreements from the FDP		Find savings important but difficult
Marianne	Husband died due to illness			Selling own produced Sogum beer, and tomatoes bought at a foreign market	Has implemented agreements from the FDP		Find savings important but difficult
Meranda	Husband is imprisoned		Temporary work for neigbours	Temporary work; cultivate own land and sell vegetables at the market	Plans to enlarge her house		Find savings important but difficult

Appendix 3: Thematising the empirical data

This appendix consist of the codes used to analyse the empirical data

Children who participated in group interviews	
First step of coding/thematising – concept driven	
Concepts from Empowerment literature • Power • Choice • Aspiration • Changes to capabilities • Subjective well-being (N.B. this was later removed from the list)	Concepts from Self-Determination Theory • Perception of relatedness • Perception of autonomy • Perception of competence
Second step of coding/thematising – empirically driven	
FSP Interventions • Village Savings and Loans Association • Family Development Plan • Income Generating Activities • Participatory Training	Families' expressions • De-isolation • It boosted me to make a change • I have a saving spirit • Self-reliant

Tabel 3.4 Thematising the empirical data

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Appendix 4 through 17

Appendices 4 to 17 are available on the attached CD

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